

Friday May 15 1998

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Decca Aitkenhead

How school could be cool

Comment, page 12

Blair puts debt relief on agenda

Martin Kettle

TONY Blair today calls on the Birmingham World Economic Summit to "give Africa a future" by adopting a package of debt relief measures to permit some of the world's poorest nations to invest in services for their people rather than be forced to channel scarce resources into crippling interest payments.

In an exclusive pre-summit interview with the Guardian, in which he ranges widely across the international political and economic scene, Mr Blair says he wants the weekend summit not to be a "talking shop" but to focus on a debt reform programme which encourages African economic growth and performance rather than military spending.

"This is part of trying to give Africa a future, and provided that we are combining it with a strong insistence on reform and change, then I think it's worthwhile to do," the Prime Minister says.

With the effects of the Asian economic crisis sparking a third successive day of rioting in Indonesia yesterday, Mr Blair warns that the regional crisis is far from over and defends the response of the world community, including the International Monetary Fund, which he says has acted "swiftly and properly".

"The IMF has done exactly what it should do in such a situation and has put a package together to get these countries over their difficulties, while making clear that that package is not a long-term solution to their problems."

Mr Blair says he has adopted that the Labour government will not intervene to protect British firms from its rigours.

"I would say the activities of government shouldn't be designed to prevent firms competing in the global market," the Prime Minister says. "That is not an intelligent response in the end, and it won't work, because the global market is upon us. If you try to shelter companies from the global market then all that will happen is that they may survive better for a few years, but then they will go under eventually because the pressures of global competition are such that that will happen."

With President Clinton, who arrived in Britain last night for the G8, after a visit to Germany, the Prime Minister says that the United States is a "positive force for good" in the world. He says he regards Britain as the "bridge between the US and Europe" and says that his greatest fear is the growth of isolationism between the two sides of the Atlantic.

"It would be disastrous for both continents if that happened. There is no future in isolationism in this world. We have to be internationally engaged," Mr Blair says.

"The United States has a very, very serious role to play and I say that part of Britain's role and function is to be a bridge between the US and Europe, to say to Europe 'Recognise the value of American leadership in the world, and to say to the US, 'Believe me, people do value the leadership. Don't think that some of the carping and criticism that you get reflects the view that people don't want America engaged, because it's not true.'"

Which week to go before the Good Friday peace accords are put to the vote in referendums in the two halves of Ireland, Mr Blair

says he is optimistic about the outcome. Addressing recent Unionist criticisms of the Government's policies on release of terrorist prisoners, Mr Blair says: "There's never been a settlement of an issue like this without prisoners being part of it, but wars there is no way that prisoners will be released unless their organisations give up violence for good."

In a strong and repeated defence of his policy of talking to parties with terrorist associations, such as Sinn Féin, Mr Blair says: "If people say that because they were at one time engaged in terrorism we are never going to have anything to do with them again, then fine, but then you will carry on with this situation indefinitely."

Later he says: "I want to see a situation come about in which there aren't any further victims of terrorism. I can't bring about that situation unless I'm prepared to talk."

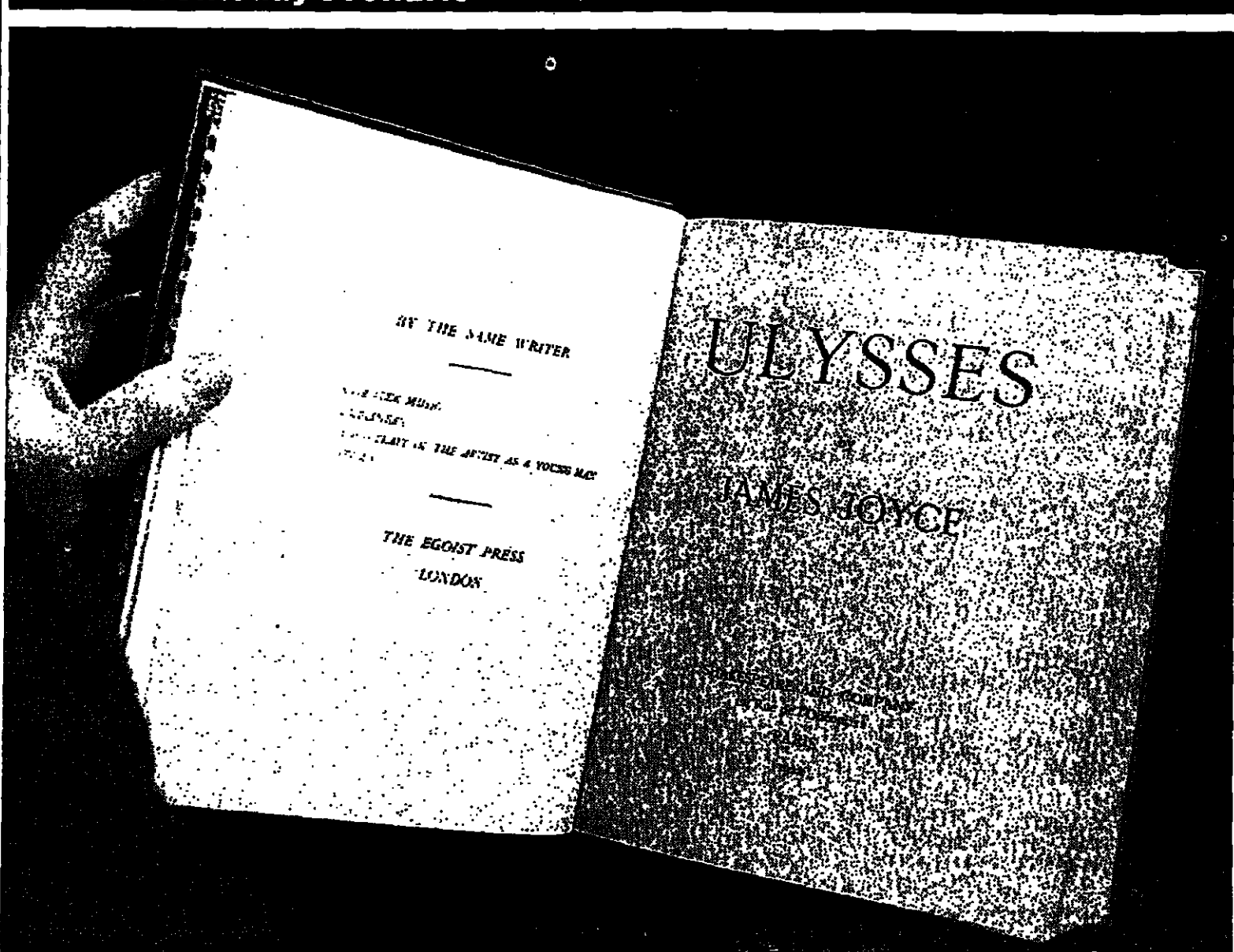
On the domestic front, Mr Blair warns of further damage to the Government's reputation as it continues to search for ways of reducing spending on benefits. Admitting that it will be very difficult to avoid confrontations with the reviled over single parent benefits earlier this year, he reiterates his belief that "the public won't accept the status quo."

Welcoming Britain's current international vogue and its reputation as Cool Britain, Mr Blair says: "I think it's entirely good that people look at Britain in a different way, and I hope, are thinking of Britain as a country with a great future as well as a great history."

"That's something we should be out there shouting from the rooftops."

Blair interview, page 4; Karl Ziegler, page 12; Leader comment, page 13

1922 Bloomsday scenario



The 1922 edition of Ulysses, which, the British establishment said, read 'as if composed by a more or less illiterate vulgar woman' PHOTOGRAPH: DAVID SILLITOE

Secret files expose Joyce fiasco

Alan Travis
Home Affairs Editor

THE law officer responsible for the ban on one of the greatest literary works of the 20th century made his decision after reading only 40 of its 732 pages.

Sir Archibald Bodkin, the Director of Public Prosecutions responsible for driving James Joyce's masterpiece, Ulysses, underground then threatened to prosecute the legendary Cambridge literary critic, "FR" Leavis, whom it is revealed, was officially regarded as a "dangerous crank or worse".

The full story behind the decision by the British authorities to ban Ulysses for obscenity is disclosed in today from state files due to remain secret for 100 years, but which have been seen by the Guardian.

The files show Bodkin was prepared to intimidate the Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge University, who needed "to be brought to his senses" to enforce the ban, from 1922 to 1936.



Towards the end, Home Office officials operated a double standard, giving permission for psychoanalysts and lecturers to import copies but denying access to ordinary citizens.

When the Bodley Head press took the decision in 1936 to publish the first British edition of 1,000 copies (signed copies at six guineas — £250 in today's money — and the rest at three guineas), it induced

panic at the Home Office. "An extremely awkward situation has arisen," says one file. A hasty Whitehall conference was convened and the then Attorney-General conceded that Ulysses was not obscene and recognised its by then established place in literature.

These Home Office files detailing the history of the ban were to be kept secret until 2037 under the 100-year rule but they have recently been deposited without any announcement in the vaults of the Public Record Office under Whitehall's "Open Government" initiative.

Academics will regard as breathtaking Bodkin's admission of the evidence on which he declared the book obscene. "As might be supposed, I have not had the time nor, I may add the inclination to read through this book. I have, however, read pages 690 to 732."

Bodkin admits that his sole concentration on Molly Bloom's orgasms left him entirely unable to understand what the book was about. "I can discover no story, there is no intro-

duction which might give a key... and the pages mentioned above... are as if composed by a more or less illiterate vulgar woman."

Four years after the Customs and the Post Office were ordered to seize all copies, Dr Leavis, then an unknown lecturer at Cambridge, attempted to get official permission to buy a copy for academic purposes.

But the Home Office sought to pressure the Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge, Dr Albert Seward, to enforce the ban within the university. The DPP threatened prosecutions and even told the Chief Constable of Cambridge to keep an eye on Dr Leavis to ensure he did not mention Ulysses in lectures.

How they tried to kill off Ulysses, page 3

Jakarta crisis mounts as Suharto flies home

Andrew Higgins in Jakarta

AS THE city around him plunged into an inferno of blazing buildings, looting mobs and anti-Chinese pogroms, Hari Mufri peered gingerly from the second-floor laboratory where medical students at the University of Indonesia learn how to dissect cadavers.

A police car blazed down the road, an angry throng poured from nearby slums, and Mr Hari, a 23-year-old undergraduate, picked through the horrifying entrails of an idealistic student movement metamorphosing into mob rule.

Archy. As the alleged death toll rose to 24, fires raged across the city as shops, showrooms, banks and countless vehicles fell victim to a frenzy of arson and pillage. Surrendering control of most of the capital, heavily armed troops massed last night in the city centre, a fragile layer of order around the palace of President Suharto.

Armoured cars rumbled down Gajah Mada Avenue, leading to the ornate mansion where Mr Suharto, having cut short a trip to Egypt to rush back to his torched capital, must today confront the wreckage of his rule. He is due in Jakarta around dawn.

Unless he takes a helicopter into town, though, he will have trouble making it much beyond the exit of his Garuda aircraft. Flaming barricades last night blocked the airport toll road, operated by a company run by Mr Suharto's daughter. Squads of slum dwellers roamed the highway, attacking travellers, demanding money and searching ve-

hicles for Chinese. Across the city, ethnic Chinese bore the full, terrifying force of yesterday's rampage. Amid the charred remains of a Chinese-run shop, carbonised skeletons poked out of the ash. In the centre of the city, a mob torched the home of Indonesia's wealthiest man, Lim Sioe Liong, a Chinese businessman and confidant of Mr Suharto. Five cars were incinerated with family pictures used as kindling.

Though opening fire spasmodically throughout the day, the security forces, which on Tuesday shot dead six students without provocation, mounted only fitful efforts to calm the chaos. Outside the University of Indonesia, troops in plain-coloured berets shook hands with protesters and flashed victory signs, a fraternisation repeated across the city. Protesters hitched lifts on troops' carriers and cheered their return to page 2, column 1

The people v Suharto, page 8

'Lewd' pop star's penalty



THE pop star, George Michael (left), was yesterday sentenced to 80 hours community work and must undergo five sessions with a psychotherapist after being caught committing a "lewd" act in a public lavatory in a Beverly Hills park.

Under the court order of two years' probation, the 34-year-old former Wham! star, who was also fined \$805 (\$480), could face Aids counselling.

He was ordered not to revisit the park.

Michael was not in court, but his lawyer, Ira Reiner, entered a no contest plea on

his behalf before a Californian judge.

The community work is likely to include office jobs, tree planting and cleaning and tidying tasks at public buildings.

Four days after his arrest, Michael went on worldwide television to acknowledge that he was homosexual.

He told CNN he was embarrassed by his arrest in the Will Rogers Memorial Park on April 7, adding: "I won't even say it was the first time it's happened."

Psychotherapy order, page 5

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FO rush to retract arms testimony

Lucy Ward and
Richard Norton-Taylor

THE arms-to-Sierra Leone affair plunged into new confusion yesterday as Britain's top diplomat was forced to retract suggestions that a minister had been briefed about the affair. In an embarrassing about turn, the Foreign Office's permanent secretary, Sir John Kerr, rushed out a statement admitting he was wrong in evidence he gave which apparently contradicted statements made by the Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook.

How frightfully odd, old chap

SIR John Kerr, the permanent secretary at the Foreign Office, and someone who would make the grandest Chinese mandarin look like a tea boy, gave evidence to the Foreign Affairs select committee about the Sierra Leone crisis. It was not an unmitigated triumph.

wasn't a good cause, the arms only arrived after fighting had ended. Got that?



Simon Hoggart

he had to change an important piece of his evidence after the session was over. You can generally tell when a grandee is in trouble because he resorts to British, a language which uses the vocabulary of English in an arcane, formalistic way. In British, you needn't admit "I don't know"; you

say, like Sir John: "Once again, you are probing the depths of my ignorance." David Heath, a Lib Dem, quoted Sir John back at himself. On learning of the original allegations of British complicity, he had said: "The situation was well short of counter-allegation." A reference to my British-English dictionary suggests this means "true".

Or take the question from Sir Peter Emery, a crusty old Tory who seemed to be driven into a rage by Sir John, possibly because of the secret little smile the permanent secretary occasionally gave after a particularly clever answer. Sir Peter said that Tony Lloyd, the junior minister, had apparently been fully briefed, but had told the

House that a newspaper article, revealing much the same material, had been "informed and scurrilous". "I don't really want to be drawn into a choice of adjectives," averred Sir John. "but I would say that in the Foreign Office, 'ill-informed and scurrilous' was a pretty mild form of debate."

House that a newspaper article, revealing much the same material, had been "informed and scurrilous". "I don't really want to be drawn into a choice of adjectives," averred Sir John. "but I would say that in the Foreign Office, 'ill-informed and scurrilous' was a pretty mild form of debate."

seemed almost irreparably weakened in the morning but appeared restored by mid-afternoon as Sir John admitted that he had "checked" his memory and found that the briefing had not included details of the inquiry.

However, while the retraction seemed initially to take the pressure off Mr Lloyd by countering suggestions that he had misled the Commons

in a statement on Sierra Leone on March 12, the Conservatives yesterday insisted the minister remained exposed. They pointed out that Sir John's letter confirmed that the briefing had mentioned reports of a possible deal between Sandline and Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, then in exile as Sierra Leone's president, to which Mr Lloyd had not referred.

Nevertheless, there is still no evidence to support claims made by Sandline that Foreign Office officials approved arms shipments, or that ministers had been aware of any breach of sanctions.

The retraction, which comes only days after Mr Lloyd was forced to admit there were "points to correct" in his own evidence to the committee, is highly embarrassing for Sir John, an able and respected civil servant.

The Tories' shadow foreign affairs spokesman, Michael Howard, last night wrote to Mr Cook condemning "a day of chaos and confusion" and demanding publication of the briefing given to Mr Lloyd, together with an apology from the minister for "misleading the house". The Tories intend to exploit the

government's embarrassment by staging a Commons debate on Monday. Downing Street attempted to play down the U-turn, suggesting that Sir John was not retracting his evidence but placing his original statements in context.

Flames of crisis burn higher

continued from page 1
action. The gestures were interpreted by some as a sign of dissent in the ranks. But they also suggest an attempt by the military command to redirect the public's fury over Tuesday's deaths from the police and army towards the Chinese and other symbols of wealth.

As crowds ravaged a district near the American embassy, Chinese bombarded the mission's switchboard with pleas for help. Japan is considering sending a warship to Jakarta port to rescue its own 10,000 nationals living in the city. The British embassy warned Britons to stay indoors.

Many businesses put up signs declaring "prizes" for "Property of native Indonesians" in the hope of fending off an anti-Chinese frenzy fired by resentment at the gap between rich and poor.

As the death toll climbed to a reported 24, rioting also exploded in other Indonesian cities, with Surabaya, Yogyakarta, and other towns in Java, the country's economic and political heartland, engulfed by mayhem.



A victim of police shooting lies on the pavement in Jakarta as riot troops fight a rearguard action in the Indonesian capital. PHOTOGRAPH: AGF/ANSA

A three-month-long campaign of protest fed by economic misery and political frustration has moved far beyond vague calls for "reform" and crystallised in a single demand: Mr Suharto, his family and cronies must go.

Before leaving Cairo, the 76-year-old ruler hinted that he might accede to what is now

probably the only way to calm the rage tearing his country of 200 million apart. "If I am no longer trusted, I will become a sage and endeavour to get closer to God," the Jakarta Post quoted him as saying. But the hopes of Mr Suharto's multiplying opponents fizzled when the foreign minister, Ali Alatas, deciphered the remarks and de-

clared they had been misunderstood: "There seems to be some confusion about what he has said, as if he is ready to step down."

The mob was more interested in a warehouse full of beer at the Multi-Blintang Brewery, some 20 miles out of town and owned by the Dutch firm Heineken. Rioters plundered the beer and carted away

Loyalist terrorist freed to attend rally

John Mullin
Ireland Correspondent

MICHAEL Stone, one of loyalism's most notorious terrorists, was granted parole yesterday and received a rapturous welcome when he attended an Ulster Democratic Party rally to support the Good Friday Agreement.

His temporary release from the Maze prison overshadowed the second visit to Belfast in eight days of Tony Blair who was seeking to reassure undecided Unionists that Sinn Féin would be barred from Northern Ireland's new Cabinet if the IRA failed to hand in some of its weapons.

The UDP denied that Stone — on four days release — had been paroled specifically to go to last night's rally at the Ulster Hall, Belfast. Having served 10 years, he is entitled to 10 days parole a year.

More than 1,000 people cheered and stamped their feet as the convicted killer strode down the aisle towards the platform.

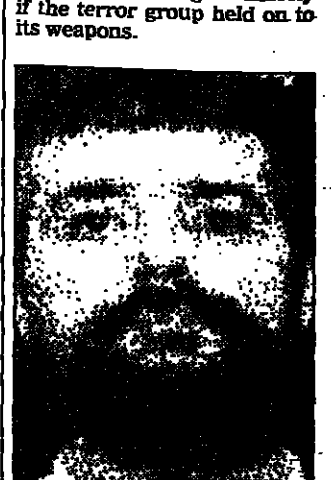
the SAS in Gibraltar. He was also convicted of three more sectarian murders.

As Mr Blair sought to halt the momentum of the No campaign ahead of next Friday's referendum, an unofficial Northern Ireland Office poll yesterday put the Yes vote at 59 per cent; No, on 18 per cent; and 23 per cent undecided.

Mr Blair's speech at the Balmoral showground was pitched at the so-called Soft No group of Ulster Unionists headed by Jeffrey Donaldson, one of six of David Trimble's 10 MPs opposing the deal.

Mr Blair said that before Sinn Féin could take its place in the executive, IRA violence had to be over for good. "People have to know that if these parties are going to benefit from proposals in the agreement, such as accelerated prisoner releases and ministerial posts, their commitment to democratic non-violent means must be established in an objective, meaningful and verifiable way... There can be no fudge between democracy and terror."

But he stopped short of what Mr Donaldson was seeking — that IRA prisoners be denied the envisaged amnesty if the terror group held on to its weapons.



Michael Stone: out of prison for four days

Israelis shoot dead eight Arabs as unrest builds

Julian Borger in Ramallah

ISRAELI troops shot dead eight Palestinian demonstrators, including two boys, as protests yesterday marked the 50th anniversary of the founding of Israel descended into the bloodiest clashes seen in the West Bank and Gaza since 1996.

The killings looked likely last night to trigger a new wave of unrest. The Palestinian leadership has tried to keep a lid on a growing sense of frustration, banking on pro-

gress in peace talks led by the United States. But there were increasing signs on the ground that things were slipping out of their control.

The deaths took place in the Gaza Strip, where Israeli soldiers used live ammunition to disperse protesters throwing stones and petrol bombs. Major-General Abdel-Razik al-Mujalid, the Palestinian security chief in Gaza, said the dead included two eight-year-old boys. Questioned on the shootings, an Israeli military spokesman said soldiers could use real bullets when

their lives were at risk. About 80 Palestinians were injured in Gaza, and more than 100 in the West Bank, where Israeli forces opened fire with rubber-coated metal bullets at crowds of stone-throwing youths in the cities of Ramallah, Hebron, Bethlehem, Nablus and Jenin. There were also scuffles in East Jerusalem.

US efforts to restart direct peace talks continued yesterday in Washington, where the US secretary of state, Madeleine Albright, was due to meet the Israeli prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, for the second time in two days.

The Palestinian leader, Yasser Arafat, appeared at a rally in the West Bank city of Ramallah. The ailing, 69-year-old leader was supported by aides on either side. He gripped a microphone and joined in a few chants of "With our blood and soul we will defend you, Oh Palestine", but departed after a few minutes. His pre-recorded speech was broadcast on loudspeakers in his absence. Officials admit that Mr Arafat's health is weak.

After a two-minute silence to commemorate 1948 — when the Palestinians were displaced in the Jewish state — thousands of Palestinian youths streamed towards an Israeli checkpoint at Ramallah's southern edge.

Palestinian police made some effort, but were unable to restrain the crowd. Israeli sharpshooters took up positions on a steep slope 100ft above the road and targeted the stone throwers with rubber-coated metal bullets normally used for crowd control.

As one Palestinian fell after another, ambulance-crews hurried forward to carry them away. Hundreds of Ramallah residents watched the unfolding battle from the surrounding hills, howling with anxiety each time a demonstrator was hit.

It was the bloodiest day in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict since September 1996, when clashes cost the lives of 61 Palestinians and 15 Israeli soldiers.

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Molly Bloom and the DPP

How they tried to kill off Ulysses

On December 22, 1922, a copy of James Joyce's ground-breaking novel was seized at Croydon airport and a Home Office decision was sought on how to respond to the situation. As officials pored with amazement over the 'illiterate' soliloquy of Molly Bloom, a bizarre process of deliberation was set in train...

How the limited first edition of Ulysses, published in France, razed the British establishment.

December 22 1922: Customs seize a copy of Ulysses at Croydon airport and ask for a Home Office decision as to whether it is prohibited as being indecent.

December 29 1922: Sir Archibald Bodkin, the Director of Public Prosecutions: "As might be supposed I have not had the time, nor may I add the inclination to read through this book. I have, however, read pages 690 to 732. I am entirely unable to appreciate how those pages are relevant to the rest of the book or indeed what the book itself is about. I can discover no story. There is no introduction which gives a key to its purpose and the pages above mentioned, written as they are, as if composed by more or less illiterate vulgar woman, form an entirely detached part of this production. In my opinion, there is more, and a great deal more than mere vulgarity or coarseness, there is a great deal of unmitigated filth and obscenity.

"The book appears to have been printed as a limited edition in Paris, where I notice the author, perhaps prudently, resides. Its price no doubt ensures a limited distribution... It is to my mind not only deplorable but at the same time astonishing that such publications as the Quarterly Review, the Observer and the Nation should have devoted any space to a critique upon Ulysses. I do not suppose that many people could read this book from cover to cover; if they did they would come across, so far as I can tell from glancing at the earlier pages, various indecencies and suggestiveness. It is in the pages mentioned above that the glaring obscenity and filth appears. In my opinion the book is obscene and indecent, and on that ground the Customs authorities would be justified in refusing to part with it.

"It is conceivable that there will be criticism of this attitude towards a well-known writer; the answer will be that filthy books are not allowed to be imported into this country. Let those who desire to possess or champion a book of this description do so."

January 1 1923: SWH [Home Office official]: "I have discussed this with the DPP and agree entirely with his opinion. The passages which he has marked are foul in their obscenity and cannot be justified by any literary motive. It seems to me that the Quarterly Review and other papers which have published notices of the book have done a disservice both to English literature and to public decency. But for these notices few people would have heard of the book which is being talked about and being obtained no doubt by private purchase in Paris. Fortunately, the book is too expensive to command a wide circle of readers. The fear is that other writers with a love of notoriety will attempt to write in the same vein. I think we may safely advise the Customs that the book is obscene and should be forfeited.

The question arises whether we ought not to make discreet enquiry amongst the booksellers in London as to whether the book is being obtained; but on the whole I think it is best to take no further action at present. A prosecution might only give the book further publicity.

The Customs should be asked to seize any further copies that may be forfeited and Post Office and the police should be informed. Intercept warrants were also signed by the Home Secretary to allow postal parcels to be searched.

November 11 1922: Under Secretary of State at the

Home Office notes that Shane Leslie in the Quarterly Review finding this work "unreadable, unquotable and unreviewable" has promptly proceeded to read it, review it and to quote from it.

"The price is, to the multitude, prohibitive. In the circumstances no general harm is likely to be caused by its contents. But if it is ever found open in the post it should be detained."

The review says Ulysses is a massive volume, whose resemblance in size and colour to the London Telephone Book must make it a danger to the unsuspecting. "It is not the kind of book to be met with on Messrs W H Smith's ubiquitous bookstalls. It is doubtful that the British Museum possesses a copy as the book could not be printed in England and no copy could fall by law to the National Collection."

April 1923: Five hundred copies are seized at Folkestone and destroyed. A circular is sent to all chief constables but only in a Manchester bookshop is "a trace of Ulysses found."

July 17 1926: Request from Chief Constable of Cambridge saying Charles Porter of Cambridge booksellers, Galloway and Porter, asks for permission to import a copy for Dr F.R. Leavis of Emmanuel College and whether copies may be supplied to students in connection with lectures at Cambridge University.

E.H. [Home Office official] writes: "Now that this work is to be the subject of a course of lectures for the English Tripos at Cambridge, there is sure to be a large demand for it and the application of these university booksellers for a removal of the ban is as natural as a Savoy Opera."

"From my knowledge of the book I am inclined to doubt its suitability for the education of the boy and girl undergraduates who may attend the lectures and I am inclined to say that so far from removing the ban, we should take steps to prevent the lectures taking place. It is a somewhat alarming proposal."

July 22 1926: SWH [Home Office official]: "This is an amazing proposition. A lecturer at Cambridge who proposes to make this book a textbook for a mixed class of

"I do not pretend to be a critic of what is, I suppose, literature but the book is an extraordinary production of which, to use a colloquialism, I am unable to make head or tail, but there are many passages in it which are indecent and entirely unsuitable to bring to the attention of either sex"

undergraduates must be a dangerous crank. Permission must of course be refused."

July 24 1926: After suggesting the whole thing could be a hoax, the DPP asks the Chief Constable to find out "who is Dr F.R. Leavis of Emmanuel College and what is his position in the college."

"It is quite clear the ban will not be removed on this disgusting book. We want to be sure of the facts before acting. No facilities should be given for lectures and we will not hesitate to take proceedings against booksellers selling Ulysses."

July 30 1926: Chief Constable to DPP: He says he has established that Leavis is not a university lecturer but gives English faculty lectures



Ulysses by James Joyce (left) was officially rated (top) 'indecent'. Involved in the furor were critic F.R. Leavis (centre) and DPP Sir Archibald Bodkin (right)

and takes pupils privately. He got his BA in 1921 and his PhD in 1925 both at Cambridge and is a member of Emmanuel College. The Cambridge University Reporter advertises the lectures, Modern Problems and Criticisms, at a fee of 15 shillings. They are to be mixed lectures with women undergraduates from Newnham and Girton Colleges. All bookshops in Cambridge have been warned.

DPP to Dr Albert Seward, Master of Downing College and Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge University:

"Since Ulysses was published in Paris in 1922 every effort has been made to secure and destroy any copies found coming into the country or circulating within this country. It is hardly to be credited that this book should be proposed as the subject of lectures let alone that it should be the subject of discussion and be available for the use of a mixed body of students."

"I do not pretend to be a critic of what is, I suppose, literature but the book is an extraordinary production of which, to use a colloquialism, I am unable to make head or tail, but there are many passages in it which are indecent and entirely unsuitable to bring to the attention of either sex."

"The book concludes with

He says he will act against any student who gets hold of a copy. SWH [Home Office official] likes the DPP's style: "This is a model of the way to address Vice-Chancellors."

The Vice-Chancellor has seen Leavis, who says he has not recommended his students to buy the book but he wants to refer to it in his lectures and asked Galloway and Porter to obtain a copy to illustrate them. DPP tells the Chief Constable to inform Galloway and Porter that the book is entirely prohibited and anybody found dealing in it shall be prosecuted.

"Should you learn that F.R. Leavis has referred to the book further I shall be glad to know as I should then probably consider it right to address a communication to Dr Leavis personally." The lectures do not go ahead.

September 22 1926: The Home Secretary believes all copies imported into the country have been seized. The Stepney town clerk writes asking for guidance following a request by Joseph M. Laak of Stepney, a miller, to the municipal library for a copy of the book. The Home Secretary rejects request and orders Laak's post to be watched to see if he tries illegally to import a copy from France.

December 3 1930: S. Herbert, JP MD of Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester, is given permission by the Home Office to have the book sent to him for "a special psychological study." The Medical Directory says he is a psychotherapist who has written widely on sexual matters.

February 2 1934: E. Haigh, the Director of Education, Eastbourne, is also given permission to read the book "from a critical survey of modern writing point of view."

January 19 1934: An author and literary critic, Desmond McCarthy, writes for permission to use the book in a series of lectures at the Royal Institute in March. Home Office minute says Ulysses may be published in London very shortly, when the question of its free circulation will have to be decided. "In view of impending events it would be impolitic to refuse."

But another Home Office official, JFH, disagrees: "This is an awkward inquiry at this moment when there have been paragraphs in the press about John Lane's having posted a copy of the book to himself from Paris (he says it got through) and about his intention to publish Ulysses here."

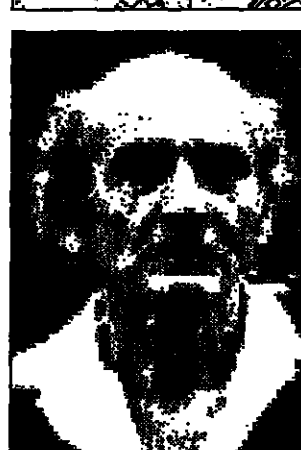
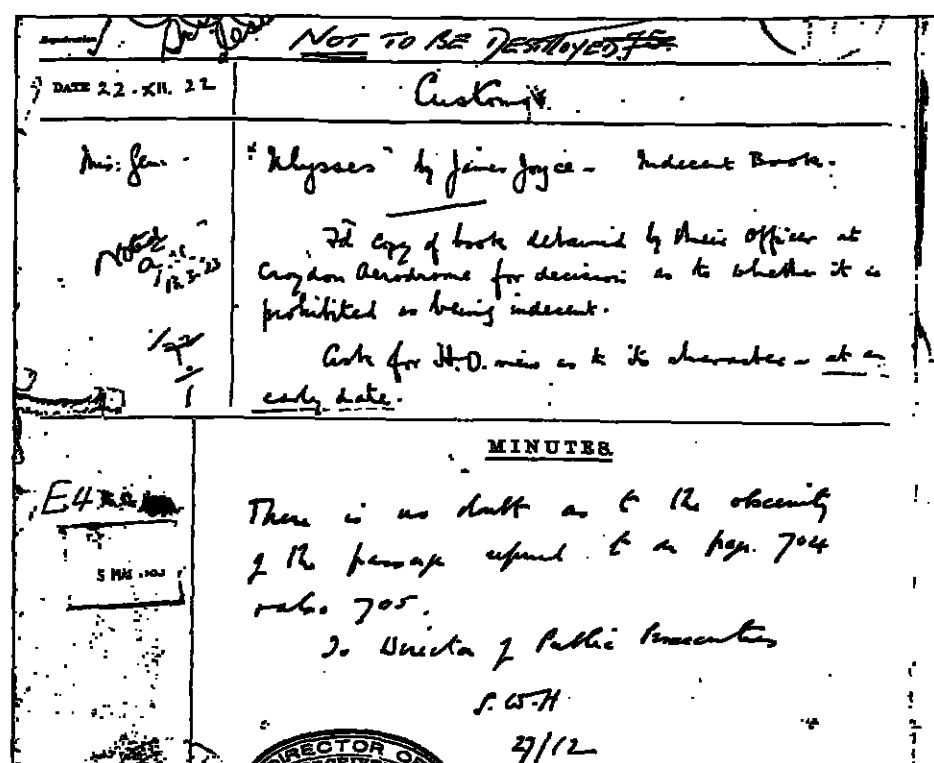
After debate McCarthy is given permission: "See it shows the Home Office is not as narrow-minded as you thought," says the letter.

September 21 1936: "An extremely awkward situation has now arisen," notes the Home Office. The Police Commissioner has reported that the booksellers, Foyles, had indicated that a limited edition was to be published in a few weeks time without stating who the publisher is.

"I had a preliminary word

with the DPP along the lines that the book costing six guineas or three guineas was not likely to get into the hands of anyone likely to be corrupted by it and that probably the prudent course was to do nothing.

"It now appears that the book was published last Saturday by John Lane of The Bodley Head. The last time it was discussed in the Home Office was when Mr T.S. Eliot and Mr Mosley of Faber and Faber came to see me in January 1934 being introduced by the present Attorney-General.



Ulysses by James Joyce (left) was officially rated (top) 'indecent'. Involved in the furor were critic F.R. Leavis (centre) and DPP Sir Archibald Bodkin (right)

able for the young. A limited expensive edition is not likely to get into the hands of the young but if it goes well there is a risk it will be followed by a cheaper edition."

October 8 1936: 1,000 copies are put on sale in London, of which 100 are a signed edition costing six guineas each and the rest at three guineas. There is "brisk demand"

November 6 1936: Whitehall conference decides that no action should be taken to prevent British publication of Ulysses.

"Attorney-General said the definition of obscenity in R v Hicklin was inadequate. In his view, the question of intention of the writer has to be taken into account as in the criminal law generally. The context or general setting also has to be considered... Standards in these matters are constantly changing. Having applied these tests to Ulysses he was of the opinion that the book was not obscene and having regard in addition to its established position in literature he had decided to take no action."

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Why we can make a difference



On the eve of the weekend G8 summit, the Prime Minister talks in detail about his policies to **Martin Kettle**

Q: You are hosting the G8 world economic summit in Birmingham this weekend. What is your principal objective?

BLAIR: What's important is that it isn't just a talking shop, but that we set out some clear directions on financial standards and the international financial system, to produce greater openness and transparency because that's the key to dealing with the effects of the Asian economic crisis and to making sure that it isn't replicated. In respect of international crime there are specific measures that we hope to get endorsed which will make it easier to combat international organised crime. On the environment we will be again be making clear our commitment to improved environmental standards. And on debt relief and issues like the millennium bug we will also have some very clear set of proposals.

Q: Do you think that the Asian economic crisis is basically over?

BLAIR: I don't think we can tell that. If action isn't taken then it won't be over. The reasons for it are manifold, but one of the things that we can do in an international forum like G8 is underline the degree to which global markets can't work properly, and certainly can't work with stability, unless there are clear accounting standards and measures of transparency that countries are prepared to adopt, and I think we've got to give a push forward to ensuring that those standards are more widely adopted so that countries can, as it were, improve their general credit rating with the international financial community.

Q: Do you think that the international financial institutions, particularly the IMF, have been the way forward wanting as a result of this unprecedented set of crises?

BLAIR: No, I don't think so. I think they've acted very swiftly and very properly to put together packages. **Q:** They have had a lot of criticism.

BLAIR: They have had a lot of criticism, that's true, but I think some of the criticism has been misdirected. I think that on the whole the IMF has done exactly what it should do in such a situation and has put a package together to get these countries over their difficulties, while making clear that that package is not a long-term solution to their problems. And it seems to me that it's really for us in positions of political leadership to say, well, whatever package is going into individual countries, there have to be changes that we're trying to push through the international financial system in order to make it more open and therefore more credible.

Q: What likelihood is there that the international debt crisis is going to be treated in a new way as a result of the Birmingham summit?

BLAIR: Well we'll have to see how much consensus exists, but Gordon Brown [Chancellor of the Exchequer] has put some proposals together for debt relief and adjustment and I hope we can agree them.

Q: Other countries still have a more conservative and stringent approach than the UK?

BLAIR: Yes, but often their hesitation is to do with the fact that they want to make sure that any assistance that we're

directing towards these countries is going to pay off in terms of dividends and in respect of those countries' growth and performance. But I've been struck by... I had an African leader in to see me not so long ago and he explained to me how his country's national income was divided up and basically, it was a large chunk for defence, a large chunk for the payment of interest on debt and a very small chunk for the actual services that his country needs. This is part of trying to give Africa a future, and provided that we're combining it with a strong insistence on reform and change then I think it's worthwhile to do.

Q: Would you be prepared to support a shift so that countries were given the aid provided that they then fulfil your conditions, rather than having to fulfil your conditions before they get the money?

BLAIR: You can adopt a number of different approaches depending on the particular circumstances. But there is no point in simply helping countries without also trying to ensure that the help that is given is properly directed and targeted and that it will have a long-term benefit for their people.

Q: It sometimes strikes me that you tend to regard the Democratic presidency in the United States as the cornerstone of what New Labour is about and what New Labour is able to accomplish and that it is even a precondition for the achievement of your goals.

BLAIR: I believe that the European modern social democratic parties and parties of the left have a lot in common with the US Democrats. That's not to say we don't come from different political cultures and there aren't different policies, but we're all tackling the same problems of economic and social change, of globalisation, of family disintegration, of community breakdown and of social exclusion. We're all tackling these problems and many of them in very similar ways.

Q: I know it sounds a strange thing to say, but if you sit down with the Chinese prime minister and you start to look at the problems of their public sector I mean, OK, it's completely different... but some of the ideas and principles are basically the same. I mean

'The reason why our programme is better known than those of our counterparts is precisely because it has echoes'

you're trying to make for an efficient set of public services that doesn't end up in a situation where you're spending large sums of money on things you don't need to spend it on.

Some of these questions are the world over and I think it is just plain foolish for us not to recognise that the American Democrats have got a contribution to make in that, without in any sense undermining the institutions that have grown up in Europe and around the world.

Q: In what ways might you take that forward? Is it an institutional question?

BLAIR: Well, it's best, certainly to begin with, it's done on the basis of a dialogue of ideas. Take certain



Tony Blair: 'European parties of the left have a lot in common with the US Democrats'

PHOTOGRAPH: MARTIN ARQUES

problems that are part of the changing picture of the centre-left everywhere in the world. Take financial prudence and respectability. Not exclusively, but to a significant degree, it's parties of the centre-left that are doing this today. The US Democrats, the British Labour Party, the Portuguese, Holland. In France there's a very strong monetary policy. If you look around the world, financial prudence is now something that the left is very strongly associated with.

Education and skills, as the basis of modern employability. Technology, education and skills. Accepted everywhere... The notion that you need to reform the

world. We have to be internationally engaged. The United States has a very, very serious role to play, and I say that because the role and function is to be a bridge between the US and Europe, to say to Europe 'Recognise the value of American leadership in the world', and to say to the US 'Believe me, people do value the leadership. Don't think that some of the carping and criticism that you get reflects the view that people don't want America engaged, because it's not true'.

Q: How important is it for Britain to play a military role around the world in support of US foreign policy?

BLAIR: We don't have our military role in support of the US specifically. Our aim is to do what is right for Britain. Britain has its own foreign and defence policy. It is part of that foreign and defence policy to work closely with our American allies. Yes, I think it is important for us to be able to play a part in the world militarily where necessary, in either UN missions or peacekeeping or Nato forces of one sort or another... We do face calls upon our military capability in different parts of the world. I think it's important for us to be in Bosnia, I think what we did in various missions is extremely important.

Q: How confident are you personally about the outcome of the vote in Northern Ireland next week [May 22] and, secondly, how worried are you that the renewed terrorist threat might disrupt either the vote or the long-term future of Northern Ireland?

BLAIR: Well, I've no doubt that those who remain wedded to terrorism will try and disrupt the process. All I say to people continuously whenever this is raised with me is 'Don't let the terrorists win'. The terrorist aim will be to stop the process, so if you stop the process because of them, you've given them the victory they sought...

In respect of the process itself, I am optimistic about it, but it is difficult, because there are a lot of emotions tied up in this. The curious thing about the debate over this is that most people have agreed — to varying degrees — with the institutional structure. It is emotional issues like prisoners, for instance, that have caused more concern.

Part of our job in these last remaining days is to make people understand that there's never been a settlement of an issue like this without prisoners being part of it, but there's no way that prisoners can be let out of prison on early release unless there's genuine peace, unless violence has been given up for good by their organisations. And it's important for people to view the package as a whole.

Q: And can you do business with former terrorists?

What has been your experience of that attempt? **BLAIR:** If they are prepared to make the switch and they make it genuinely, from bullet and ballot box to ballot box exclusively, then yes, I hope and believe that that is the case. But in the end actions speak louder than words, though words are important. My view is that we have got to give it the chance to work. If people say that because they were at one time engaged in terrorism we are never going to have anything to do with them again, then fine, but then you will carry on with this situation indefinitely.

Q: The Real IRA, so-called, has said that it is still targeting the British Cabinet, and presumably

that means you. Where we are sitting there has been an attack on a previous cabinet within our lifetime. How concerned are you personally that you might be a target?

BLAIR: Well, personally, I mean you just live with that. It goes with the job. I mean what worries me more is the people who don't have the protection that I have and all the rest of it. It's the ordinary folk that get hurt in these situations. I understand the feelings of people who've been victims of terrorism and say to me 'How can you have a situation where you're ever prepared to sit in a room with members of Sinn Féin or the former Protestant paramilitaries?' And my answer to that is that

'It is about taking the values of the left — social justice, solidarity, community, liberty — and recasting them for the new world'

I want to see a situation come about in which there aren't any further victims of terrorism. I can't bring about that situation unless I'm prepared to talk.

Q: It was reported recently that you have had a seminar discussion with a group of intellectuals to discuss the idea of The Third Way. Does this mean you are still trying to formulate the ideas?

BLAIR: No. My view of this idea is very clear. It is that it offers a way between not merely the politics of the new right — *laissez-faire*, leave everything to markets, social indifference — and the politics of the old left — state control, run everything through the centre — but that

'If you look round the world, financial prudence is now something that the left is very strongly associated with'

it also offers a way forward between the two types of left politics traditionally, one of which was principled, but was based on the old left positions, and the other of which was "pragmatic" but which basically involved saying we just want to get the same things more gradually. It's an attempt to say there's a principled position which is also entirely sensible, and it is about taking the values of the left — social justice, solidarity, community, democracy, liberty — and recasting them and reshaping them for the new world. I think you can see very clearly the outlines of the third way in each of the various areas of policy. On the economy, for example, the embracing of globalisation as inevitable and also as desirable actually, in terms of greater trade and international exchange and saying that the role of government is not to pile up big budget deficits and hope for the best, but is to run a prudent financial policy and combine that with government intervention to equip people and business to survive and compete in this new global market...

So I would like in certain areas to make parts of British industry more competitive not less, but combine that at the same time with active measures in the labour market, in education, in adult retraining, in the employment services for small businesses, in science and technology, to equip people for that.

Q: What about defending people against the consequences of globalisation? Many people want people to take action which recognises their security and dignity.

BLAIR: I agree. Now the issue is: what is the answer to security? In a very traditional sense I would say active government, but in a very modern sense I would say the activities of government shouldn't be designed to preventing firms competing in the global market. That is not an intelligent response in the end and it won't work, because the global market is upon us. If you try to shelter companies from the global market then all that will happen is that they may survive better for a few years but then they will go under eventually because the pressures of global competition are such that that has to happen. What you can do is to equip them and the individuals working for them better to survive the rigours of that global market. That's to me what the third way is...

The reason why New Labour gets so much publicity abroad, why I would say that our programme is better known among most European socialist and social democratic

finance it and it isn't working properly, and we're not going to finance a welfare system that doesn't encourage people to get off benefit and into work. We're not going to finance a system in which the estimates are that £2 billion is eaten up in fraud just in one set of benefits alone. They're not going to finance that system. So, either we reform it, or people will dismantle it, and so I say there that the third way is for reform, not for status quo or dismantling. And that is the intelligent rational choice. That's where the Democrats have been aiming for in the States. It's where the Dutch government has been. The Italian government is now putting through welfare reform... It's where most modern governments are. Everyone's suppling with this.

Q: Britain is fashionable again. People talk about Cool Britannia. You encourage this. What is your aim here?

BLAIR: I never coined the phrase Cool Britannia, actually. It was *Newsweek* magazine that did that. But the idea that's behind it, which is that Britain is an exciting, dynamic place to be, is not a thing I'm ashamed of. I'm proud of that. The British have many great qualities, but can never quite understand that we can be incredibly cynical about ourselves... I think it's entirely good that people want to come to Britain, that they look at Britain in a different way, and, I hope, are thinking of Britain as a country with a great future as well as a great history. That's something we should be out there shouting from the rooftops. And the fact that people attack us for doing a lot with the design, the creative industries, the new technology industries, this is just a form of economic snobbery. These design and creative industries in Britain today are huge, multi-billion pound businesses employing hundreds of thousands of people. Now, as I say to people, if I got up and had a debate about the British coal industry, which is important to Britain but employs now just a few thousand people, people would think that's an entirely intelligent thing to do, and I think it's important that we do it. But you get up and have a debate about design and people think there's something funny about it. But this is where the future is for a lot of people who are going to work in it in different ways. You meet a lot of the young people coming out of college, they're setting up their own businesses now in Britain. They're into different ways of working, creative industries, and the fact that Britain has tremendous advantages in these fields, that we're really getting our act together as a country, that's great and we should be really happy about it... In the end you've got to say if you're leading a political party or a country 'Look, this is what I believe. This is what I'm about, and it's entirely up to you whether you support it or not. That's your decision.'

Q: You had a birthday last week and you're only, what is it, 45?

BLAIR: Yes, 45. What age are you now, Martin?

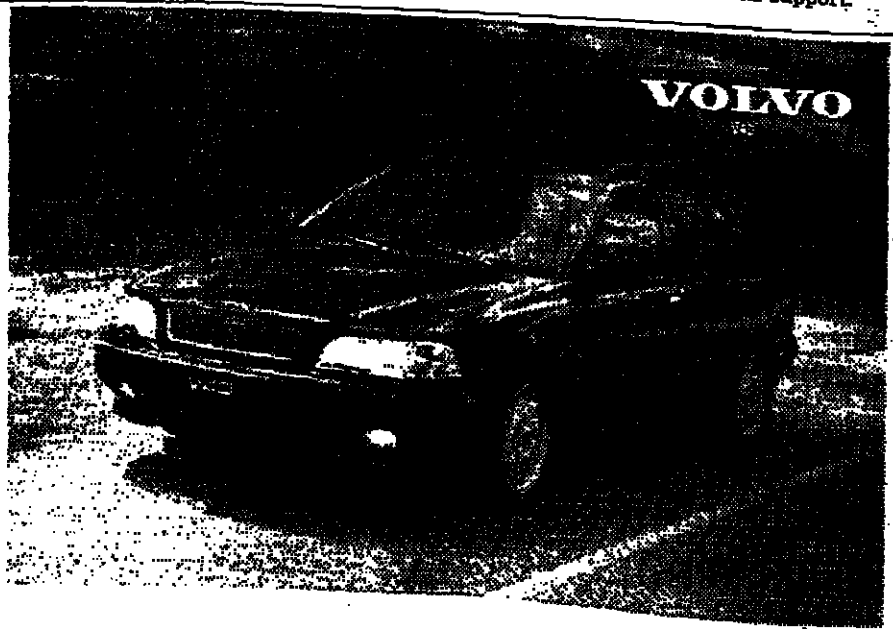
Q: I'm 48, really old. But do you see yourself going on and on and on, in the words of your predecessor but one? [Margaret Thatcher]

BLAIR: I think it's a bit premature to start talking about retirement, if that's what you mean. [Laughs] But the one thing I never forget, is that those who put you there, i.e. the great old British people, are those that also decide whether you stay or not, so you're better not to presume too much upon their patience or their support.

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The Rev Nicola Jay outside the church in Sacriston where she has held services during the 'lock-out' at Kimblesworth. PHOTOGRAPH: NORTH NEWS & PICTURES

Woman priest's job in jeopardy

Bishop warns vicar 'locked out of church' in row with villagers

Peter Hetherington

THE Bishop of Durham is threatening to sack a woman priest next week over a stand-off with a rebel congregation that has led to a church being locked up for 18 months.

The Rt Rev Michael Turnbull has accused the Rev Nicola Jay of breaking church law by refusing to hold services in the old mining village of Kimblesworth in a dispute with a group of churchgoers.

They have accused her of undermining the Co Durham mission by refusing to bury the dead, baptise children or marry parishioners in the village — charges which Ms Jay and her supporters vigorously deny. They claim that the 61-year-old priest is a victim of sexism, spite and petty parochialism in a vendetta which goes back long before her appointment to the joint parish in 1995.

"She's an excellent, caring person, and there's no doubt there is a hidden agenda to try to get her out," said Derek Browne, one of Ms Jay's strongest supporters, who this week handed a 1,750-name petition to the bishop.

"Superficially, the whole thing does not appear to make sense, but a very antagonistic, small group of people are denying a community the services of a first-class priest."

Ms Jay is the vicar of a joint parish which embraces the 14th century St Philip and St James church at Kimblesworth, and St Peter, five miles away in Sacriston.

Services have not been held at Kimblesworth since last year, after relations between the vicar and her parish finally broke down. She was accused of refusing to shake hands with two people — a sign of peace — during a Sunday Mass. This was put down to a misunderstanding.

"It all started in October 1995, when two members of the congregation got it into their minds that I had snubbed them after I never shook hands with them," she said yesterday. "And then in autumn last year I was thrown out and then locked out of the church."

"There is a regular attendance of about 16, and they do not want me any more. I would go back, but there are no worshipping Christians in Kimblesworth."

Since the "lock-out", Ms Jay has held services only in Sacriston — prompting Dr Turnbull to warn her that she could lose her licence to hold services because she is in breach of canon law. She has been summoned to meet him next week. The bishop has refused to comment.

Ms Jay said: "This has been a terrible time for me and my family. I just want the situation sorted out once and for all."

But David Forster, former church secretary at Kimblesworth, said feelings against Ms Jay ran too deep to accept her any more. "She spurred two members of the congregation, and this led to a row. But this was only the culmination of events which began shortly after she took over."

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£40 breast cancer drug 'could save thousands'

Sarah Hossain Health Correspondent

UP TO a thousand deaths a year from breast cancer in this country, and 20,000 worldwide, could be avoided by much greater use of the drug Tamoxifen, scientists said yesterday.

The drug, a British invention that dates from 1968, when it was investigated as a potential contraceptive, is already saving more lives than any other cancer drug but is usually prescribed only for older women to prevent a recurrence of breast cancer.

Recently it was at the heart of a transatlantic controversy when British scientists expressed concern that an American study on the use of Tamoxifen in preventing cancer among women at high risk of the disease had been halted early.

But yesterday scientists from Oxford University's clinical trial service unit, who have for 15 years been collecting and analysing data on the effects of Tamoxifen on breast cancer, urged that all women who have had surgery for a hormone-sensitive breast cancer (which most of the tumours are) should be given Tamoxifen for five years.

"Starting Tamoxifen immediately after breast cancer surgery prevented one in six women from relapsing, and one in 12 from dying, irrespective of age," said Richard Foin, professor of medical statistics and epidemiology. "But most of the young breast cancer patients who need Tamoxifen aren't yet getting it."

The latest work, compiled in Oxford from studies carried out around the world by the Early Breast Cancer Trialists' Collaborative Group, pulls together data on 37,000 women, of whom 30,000 had hormone-sensitive breast cancers. It is the largest random study of any cancer drug.

The report, published in this week's *Lancet*, reveals that Tamoxifen is just as effective in younger as in older women; is equally bene-

ficial whether chemotherapy is used or not; and works equally well whether or not the cancer has started to spread beyond the breast.

The drug, because it is out of patent, is cheap. It costs \$40 a year, or £200 for the five-year course the scientists are now recommending.

But a study of the prescribing practices of 841 leading breast cancer doctors, led by Christina Davies, another member of the clinical trial service unit, revealed that only half of them would give Tamoxifen to a patient under 40.

And while 99 per cent said they would give it to women over 60, in practice the numbers might be smaller, Dr Davies said.

Tamoxifen blocks the oestrogen receptors of a tumour and starves it of hormone. It targets the small, sometimes

Tamoxifen after surgery prevented one in six women from relapsing

undetectable bits of cancer left after surgery, which can spread and grow years later into a dangerous recurrence of the disease.

The most worrying side effect is an increased possibility of endometrial (womb lining) cancer. But for every two or three women in 1,000 who might die of that, 80 will be prevented from dying of breast cancer, the scientists say.

"It does 30 times more good than harm," said Rory Collins, professor of medicine and epidemiology at Oxford. Some women get hot flashes on the drug. Other side effects complained of, such as nausea and weight gain, are not confirmed by the study.

Prof Foin said there could be several thousand women in Britain who are not on Tamoxifen, but who could derive great benefit from it and even avoid death.

Citizenship may nudge history off curriculum

Blunkett wants more class time preparing pupils for adult life

John Carvel Education Editor

THE Government yesterday ordered a comprehensive review of the school curriculum to allow more time for classes in citizenship, personal and social education, and other preparation for adult life — probably at the expense of traditional subjects such as French, history and technology.

David Blunkett, Education and Employment Secretary, said he wanted a more flexible and less prescriptive syllabus, allowing schools to focus on the priorities.

He asked the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority to re-examine what children were taught from their first years in primary school until they completed their GCSEs. Changes would be introduced from September 2000.

The authority said schools wanted stability, and sources indicated that the likely result of its review was a slimming down of their obligations to cover the full 10-subject statutory curriculum.

But ministers want it to consider what else schools should be doing to prepare young people "for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life."

This would include: training in citizenship; personal, social and health education; and "the spiritual, moral and cultural dimension."

The review will extend from early socialisation of children in primary school — teaching them to know the difference between right and wrong — to community service and financial literacy classes for 14 to 16-year-olds. It is likely to recommend teachers to spend more time on sex education, drug awareness and the responsibilities of parenthood.

A working party under the politics professor Bernard Crick has recommended schools to spend about 5 per

George Michael ordered to have psychotherapy

Christopher Reed In Los Angeles

A CALIFORNIAN court yesterday ordered pop singer George Michael to attend five sessions with a psychoanalyst after he admitted committing a lewd act in a public lavatory.

Under a two year probation order, the 34-year-old former Wham! star, who was not in court, will have to complete 80 hours of community work, and is barred from visiting the Beverly Hills park where he was caught behaving lewdly last month.

He was also fined \$905 (£480), but with costs he will pay about treble that.

The probation term could include Aids counselling although there was no specific order for this.

Michael has a \$3 million house about one mile from the Will Rogers Memorial Park in the Los Angeles enclave of the Beverly Hills park where he was caught. He was in England, where he has a home in Hampstead, north London.

His lawyer, Ira Reiner, told

Young mother killed herself

Helen Carter

A YOUNG mother killed herself with a shotgun because she was suffering from post-natal depression, an inquest heard yesterday.

Tracy Forshaw committed suicide seven days after she gave birth prematurely to her son James, who was in a special care baby unit at the time.

Psychiatrists estimate that between 10 and 15 per cent of mothers suffer from post-natal depression.

Mrs Forshaw took her husband Gerard's shotgun from a locked cabinet and shot herself at their home in Ormskirk, Lancashire, four months ago.

He told the inquest at Preston that she disappeared four days after the birth and although she never normally drank alcohol, she arrived back home drunk late at night.

He said: "I told her she had got this depression and she must go to hospital. I asked her why she was doing this. She told me: 'I am not good enough to be James's mother.'"

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Christopher Reed In Los Angeles

A CALIFORNIAN court yesterday ordered pop singer George Michael to attend five sessions with a psychoanalyst after he admitted committing a lewd act in a public lavatory.

Under a two year probation order, the 34-year-old former Wham! star, who was not in court, will have to complete 80 hours of community work, and is barred from visiting the Beverly Hills park where he was caught behaving lewdly last month.

He was also fined \$905 (£480), but with costs he will pay about treble that.

The probation term could include Aids counselling although there was no specific order for this.

Michael has a \$3 million house about one mile from the Will Rogers Memorial Park in the Los Angeles enclave of the Beverly Hills park where he was caught. He was in England, where he has a home in Hampstead, north London.

His lawyer, Ira Reiner, told

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Race killing suspects in plea to court

Lucy Patton

FIVE men arrested but never convicted over the murder of Stephen Lawrence are to make an 11th-hour legal attempt to avoid giving evidence at the public inquiry into the killing.

Lawyers for the men last night told the inquiry chairman, Sir William Macpherson, that they want a judicial review of his decision to summons them to give evidence.

They will ask the High Court for leave to apply for the judicial review. The five have been told they could face legal proceedings if they do not attend to give evidence on June 8.

All witnesses giving evidence to the inquiry being held at the Elephant and Castle, south London, have been given immunity from prosecution as a result of anything they say at the hearing.

The men were called to an inquest into Mr Lawrence's death last year, but refused to answer questions.

Mr Lawrence, an 18-year-old A level student, was stabbed to death by a white gang who shouted racist abuse near a bus stop in Eltham, south London, in 1993.

Neil Acourt, aged 22, Gary Dobson, 22, and Luke Knight 20, were cleared at the Old Bailey in 1996. The cases of Jamie Acourt, 21, and David Norris, 21, never went to trial.

The public inquiry was set

up following public unrest and criticism of the police over the handling of the murder investigation.

Michael Holmes, solicitor for Mr Dobson, said: "I, on behalf of Gary Dobson, am not prepared to see this turn into a trial."

"My client has had no evidence offered against him at the Central Criminal Court by the prosecution. Gary Dobson would have attended voluntarily without a summons."

Henry Milner solicitors, acting for the Acourt brothers and Mr Norris, declined to comment.

A spokesman for the inquiry said later that the tribunal would pay for legal representation for the five men at the inquiry, but not for the judicial review application.

A Legal Aid Board spokeswoman said she could not discover whether the five had applied for or been granted legal aid for the application.

Earlier yesterday, a senior policeman denied "infiltrating" in order to avoid arresting suspects for the murder.

Detective Superintendent Ian Crampton, who was in charge of the investigation for the first three days, said: "I was never dragging my feet."

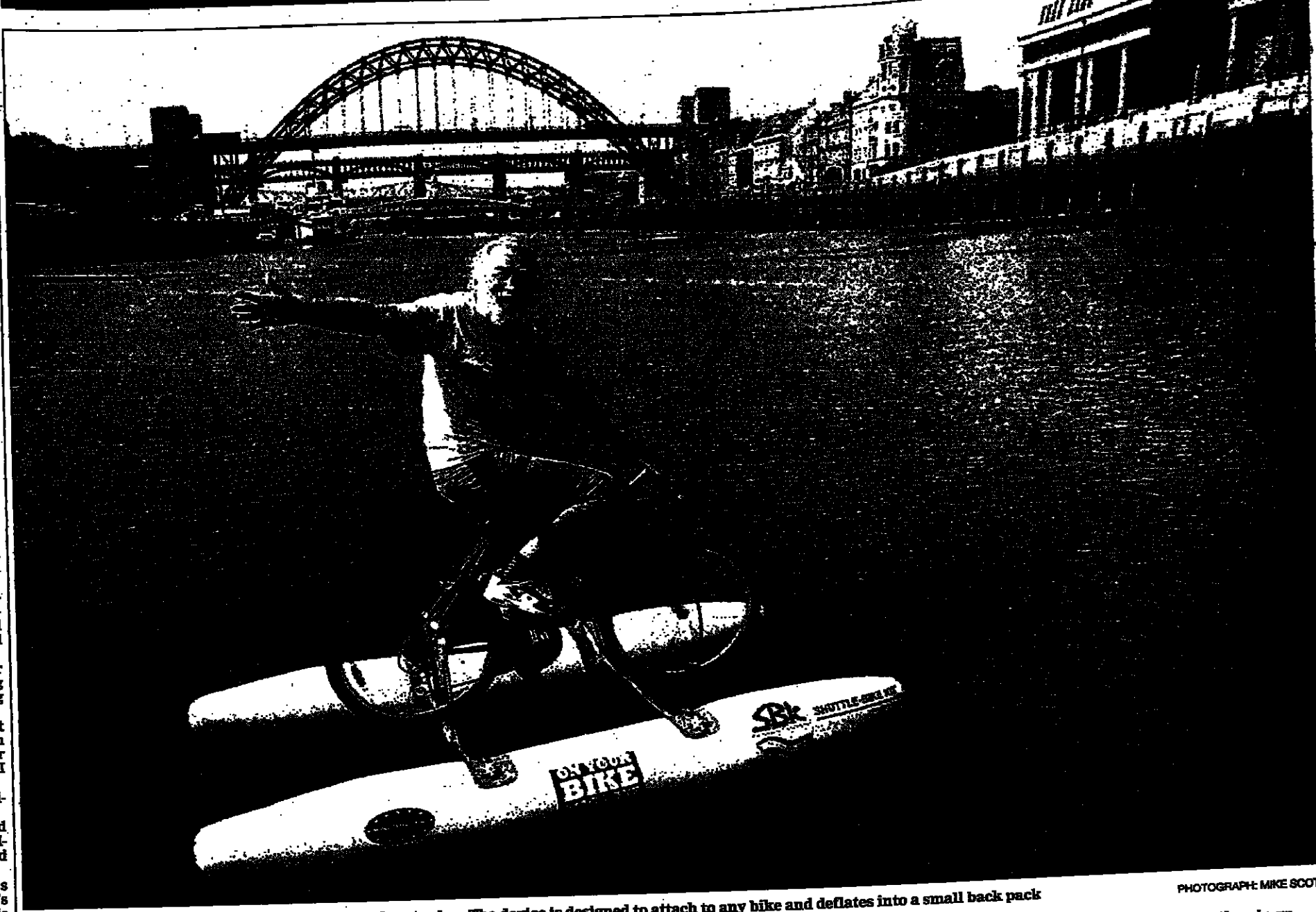
He said he made every decision with good intent.

On Wednesday he admitted to the inquiry that, with hindsight, he should have arrested the suspects sooner.

The hearing continues today.

Mr Lawrence's friend, Duwayne Brooks, is due to give evidence.

Water bike rides the waves



David Bellamy testing the aqua bike in Gateshead yesterday. The device is designed to attach to any bike and deflates into a small back pack

PHOTOGRAPH: MIKE SCOTT

87 per cent of adolescent births in Britain occur outside marriage, writes **Amelia Gentleman**

UK has top level of unmarried teenage mothers

B RITAIN has the highest level of unmarried teenage motherhood in the world, a comprehensive global study of women's sexuality in more than 50 countries has found.

Of the 41,700 children born to mothers aged 15-19 each year in this country, 87 per cent were outside marriage.

That compares with 62 per cent in the United States, 50 per cent in Poland and 10 per cent in Japan.

The rate is the highest according to the study, which was collated from surveys in 53 developing and developed countries.

It is also significantly higher than in most third world countries.

The report — published yesterday by the International Planned Parenthood Federation to mark International Day of Families — concludes that adolescent women worldwide need radically improved access to sex education.

It also calls for the provision of contraception services to be dramatically improved.

The report found up to 60 per cent of adolescent births worldwide are unplanned.

Roni Livanage, the IPPF's youth officer, said poverty

and a lack of education and employment opportunities were behind the trend in Britain.

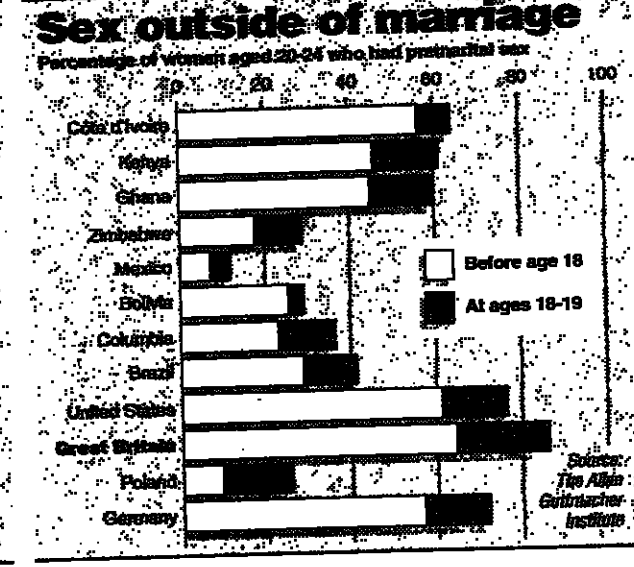
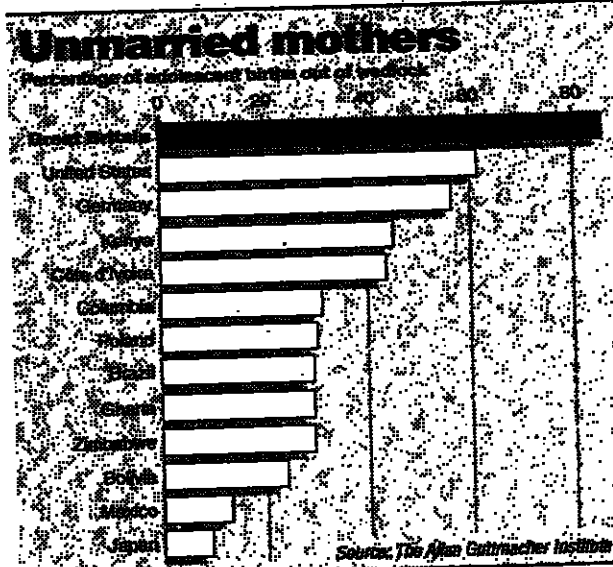
"As a result, adolescent women have low aspirations. There is also an inconsistency in the contraceptive services and sex education available to teenagers across the country."

"Sex education is not on the national curriculum and when there are shortages this is one of the first things to go."

While conceding that Britain had a serious problem with teenage pregnancies, family planning organisations argued yesterday that the high level of unmarried teenage parents could be interpreted in a more positive light.

"The Brook Advisory Centre, the young persons' sex advice charity, said: "We are aware that Britain has a problem with unwanted teenage pregnancies — the most recent figures show that they rose by 11 per cent in 1996, which is very worrying."

"But the high level of unmarried teenage mothers suggests that women are thinking hard before they get married rather than automatically rushing into shotgun marriages."



"What these figures don't show is that very often both parents' names are registered on the birth certificate, indicating that the adolescents are cohabiting before deciding to get married, which is sensible, given that all the evidence suggests that early marriages are less likely to last."

Researchers from the New York-based Alan Guttmacher Institute, which co-ordinated the study, also indicated that a significant percentage of adolescent girls are being coerced into having sex against their will.

In the United States, 40 per cent of women who had sex before they were 15 said they were forced into it.

Institute president Jeanne Rosoff said: "The level of sexual coercion is much higher than we expected — and as far as we could see it was probably as high as 30 per cent, even at a conservative estimate."

Across the world, women continue to be disadvantaged in their access to education, and the length of time they spend in school has a direct correlation to their sexual behaviour.

In Britain, women who have had fewer than 11 years of schooling are four times

more likely than those educated for longer to be married or cohabiting before they are 18.

The report argues that the world's 541 million young women aged between 10 and 19 around the world form a crucial demographic force, soon to be the largest generation in history to make the transition from children to adults.

Their childbearing behaviour will soon have a significant effect on global population in the near future.

But Ms Rosoff said the report did not paint a wholly bleak picture of their position.

"The lives of the young women in this report are to some extent already determined."

"Most are no longer in school, many are married or mothers and some have been exploited sexually. But the same fate does not need to befall the next generation of adolescents."

"The condition of women is improving," she added.

"Education is improving and the age of marriage is increasing even in the most conservative countries. There is a general understanding that the development of a country does depend on the women's input."

There's a feeling that if you're not having sex, then you ought to be

allowed to talk about homosexuality so that remained a very fuzzy area. I think what we really wanted to know was where the local family planning centres were and where we could get confidential advice from — but the classes were never that practical.

There is a little bit of pressure because everyone says people are having sex younger now, so there is probably a feeling that if you're not, then you ought to be.

But I think that one of the things that sex education — both in the magazines and at school — did do was to stress that you can and should wait until you really like someone. I know a couple of people who believe in the idea of no sex before marriage so that idea isn't extinct, but they are very much in the minority.

Most people are pretty smart about using contraception because of Aids. They take it as read that a condom will be used. But I'd say most girls still don't take responsibility themselves, despite what they're told during the classes.

There's a danger of being called a slag or a slapper if you're caught carrying condoms.

THE best sex education I got came from girls' magazines which I started reading when I was about 13. We did have the occasional class at school.

At school it was mainly done in biology lessons from a scientific point of view, just about the body works. We did have a session where we were meant to discuss sex more generally but the teacher became extremely embarrassed and it degenerated into awkward giggling.

There were very cloudy afterwards — teachers weren't

Family planning organisations state the best way to reduce teenage pregnancies is to improve the quantity and quality of sex education nationwide. KATE RAYLOR, 18, explains how much of the information she got from her London girls' school was impractical and inadequate.

AS WOMEN take the jobs that used to be reserved for the boys, and as they progress steadily up the career ladder, men are left feeling depressed and suicidal, a study has found.

In the past 20 years there have been enormous changes in the lives of men and women, with role reversals in the home and male breadwinners facing redundancy in middle age. This coincides, the authors of the study say, with a marked change in the pattern of depression.

Women traditionally have higher rates of depression than men, but according to psychiatrists from the Royal Edinburgh hospital writing in the British Medical Journal yesterday, "this difference in prevalence may be changing."

Statistics show that men are committing suicide and harming themselves in increasing numbers. Polish Shajahan and Jonathan Cavanagh looked at the admissions to Scottish hospitals to see whether this meant that more men were suffering from depression.

They took a 15-year period of big changes in socioeconomic and employment

ing up the kit than in cycling on the water once it's inflated," confessed Carlton Reid, editor of On Your Bike magazine, which brought the first batch to Britain from Italy.

Peddle power, through a transmission tube linked to a propeller, can provide a top speed approaching eight miles per hour. The handlebars are linked to a small rudder.

Environmentalist David Bellamy, who made the first trip, saw possibilities for expeditions — taking explorers into areas which cannot be reached by paths.

"I have a big project in the New Hebrides and this could be ideal," he said.

The "shuttle bike kit", which is easily crammed into a small rucksack when deflated, can, according to the sales blurb, be assembled in 10 minutes. "You expend far more energy blow-

ing up the kit than in cycling on the water once it's inflated," confessed Carlton Reid, editor of On Your Bike magazine, which brought the first batch to Britain from Italy.

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Women's gain is men's pain

Sarah Boseley Health Correspondent

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Statistics show that men are committing suicide and harming themselves in increasing numbers. Polish Shajahan and Jonathan Cavanagh looked at the admissions to Scottish hospitals to see whether this meant that more men were suffering from depression.

They took a 15-year period of big changes in socioeconomic and employment

patterns, from 1980 to 1995. They found that women's recorded rates for depression fell from 6.1 to 5.3 per 1,000, while the male rate went up from 3.1 to 3.5 per thousand. The ratio of women to men admitted to psychiatric hospital fell from 1.9 to 1.5.

"Important changes in gender roles have occurred over the last 20 years," Dr Shajahan and Dr Cavanagh write. "These include a decrease in the number of men in full time work and an increase in the number of women in both part time and full time work. For men, the resultant loss of status as sole financial provider for the family, the perceived loss in social status and the consequent social isolation could all be considered risk factors for depression."

Other reasons may be put forward for these figures, they say. It is possible that more men have overcome their traditional reluctance to see a psychiatrist. Perhaps more doctors are sending male patients for treatment, or maybe men with less severe forms of depression than in the past are being admitted.

But, the authors say, no change in admission criteria has been reported and the findings are in line with other studies that have found increasing depression in men.

News in brief

Four die in arson attack

A MOTHER, her two children and a babysitter were killed after an arson attack on their house in Newcastle upon Tyne yesterday.

Lisa Dodgson, aged 25, and her daughters Amy Louise, aged two, and Rose Marie Lakey, aged nine months, were trapped in an upstairs bedroom after petrol was poured through the letter box.

Despite attempts by firefighters and paramedics, the mother and two daughters died at the Royal Victoria Infirmary, Newcastle.

Emma Louise Cater, aged 16, who had stayed over at the house after babysitting the two children, died in hospital yesterday afternoon.

Detective Superintendent Derek Storey, who is leading a murder inquiry, said: "This is one of the worst incidents I've dealt with in 31 years with the police."

He added: "It beggars belief that anyone could do this to such young children and their mother. So far we have no motive for such a vicious attack."

"We will be making extensive inquiries into the lifestyle of Lisa Dodgson and we would appeal for any friends, relatives or acquaintances to contact the police."

Mr Storey said: "We believe the fire was deliberate and an accelerant was used at the front door."

Fifty police officers are working on the case and a 24 hour incident unit has been set up in the street.

education

Every Tuesday in the

The Guardian INTERNATIONAL

صكنا من الامل

Nothing left to chance as planet watches revitalised city in grip of summit fever

Stuart Miller

ON ONE side of Centenary Square, a team of gardeners worked furiously to plant rows of yellow and blue pansies. On the other, a police unit sealed manhole covers and checked the fountains for suspect devices.

Between them, locals and tourists alike soaked up the warm spring sunshine and watched with wry amusement a city in the grip of summit fever.

Last weekend it was the sub-cultural force of Eurovision, this weekend it is the political machinations of the G8 summit of the world's most powerful nations. But to the people of Birmingham, it makes little difference. For the second time in a week, their city is preparing to play host to the world and nothing is being left to chance.

Even the threat to civic pride posed by an unsightly patch of brown grass on the road from the airport has been dealt with ruthlessly by council workers brandishing green spraypaint. This is a Birmingham so transformed that many of its residents struggle to recognise it.

It is no coincidence that when the heads of government walk from the Council House into the City Museum and Art Gallery's Edwardian Tea Rooms for

their first working dinner tonight they will pass an exhibition celebrating the life of Joseph Chamberlain. Written on a display behind the exhibits is a promise he made on becoming mayor in 1878: "This city shall not, with God's help, know itself." More than a century on, the path of eight heads of government is, according to

'We don't care what the rest of Britain thinks about us. We know that the rest of the world has confidence in what we are doing'

Brian Bird, council deputy leader

the council, proof of that achievement.

"This has lifted the people of Birmingham, it's the icing on the cake," said Brian Bird, the council's deputy leader. "You can feel it out there. We don't care what the rest of Britain thinks about us. We know that the rest of the world has confidence in what we are doing."

A decade ago, Birmingham

ham would have been the last choice for an event which will involve more than 1,500 delegates and 3,000 journalists from across the globe. But in recent years, the city has been busy spending £200 million of European Union development funds on a radical makeover.

The area between the International Convention Centre, where much of the serious business of this weekend will take place, and the National Indoor Arena is the most obvious beneficiary of this investment.

The network of canals, which used to be receptacles for shopping trolleys and used condoms, has been cleaned up. The crumbling buildings and towpaths which bordered the canals have been painstakingly restored.

Not everybody has been impressed by the preparations. "It's a lot of money for nothing," said Mark, a student. "Clinton and all that lot don't care a toss about the city."

But yesterday the summit was the only show in town. In the Paradise Forum shopping centre, each of the eight countries was on display. Japan's was crowded as people scooped rice crackers. "We've had a few misunderstandings about the difference between Chinese and Japanese," said Heidi Porter, of the Japan Festival Education Trust. "But apart from that, everybody just seems very excited."



Birmingham's canals, once receptacles of shopping trolleys and condoms, have been cleaned up PHOTOGRAPH: MARTIN ARLES

Hot spots

□ **Sea Life Center** designed by Norman Foster, it sits beside the International Convention Centre and the National Indoor Arena. The nearest sea is 80 miles away

□ **Sherbourne Wharf** where the city's canal network comes together. Fashionable shops, bars and restaurants as well as narrow boats offering hand-painted crafts and cruises

□ **New Streets** once traffic-clogged and fume-ridden, but now a pedestrianised and continental-style shopping boulevard

□ **Balti's** the city's staple diet. Best examples found outside the city centre in Sparkhill and Balsall Heath

□ **Victoria Square** cool piazza in front of the town hall. Home of a superb fountain and Anthony Gormley's Iron Man, a forerunner of the Angel of the North

□ **House of Gods** ubiquitous techno night is best-known example of one of the best club scenes in the country

□ **The Jewellery Quarter** thriving home to countless workshops and shops, as well as an excellent museum. More diamonds are cut here than in Hatton Garden, London

Cannes Festival



Actor Richard Harris (left) who plays conservationist George Adamson in the film *To Walk with Lions* was joined by fellow actor John Michie (centre) and conservationist Tony Fitzjohn yesterday on the beach in Cannes to play with lion cubs Pasha and Caesar. The film, to be released in April, focuses on George's own violent death at the hands of Kenyan poachers. His wife, Joy, was murdered by one of her servants PHOTOGRAPH: RHONDA GALEBRATH

Poor distribution deals undermine British film boom

Dan Gledhill in Cannes

IT WAS a variant on a familiar refrain. "The British have arrived," said Tom Clarke, the Government's film minister, as he opened the British Pavilion at the Cannes Film Festival yesterday.

But the minister's celebration of the arrival of the British film industry may be

a little premature. Mr Clarke was keen to talk up the increased share of British film at the box office, now at 23 per cent, and to announce that admissions in Britain last year totalled 137 million people.

But new figures produced by Screen Finance show that the British film industry is in danger of overreliance. More films are being made, but the number released has stayed the same. Mr Clarke's assertion

that "good British films will find themselves on screens in Britain" is shown to have only a loose relation to the reality faced by the industry.

In 1996, the latest year for which data is available, production rose from the 78 British films made in 1995 to 114 films. But of those films, a third was released. The remainder await a distributor.

The figures reveal the importance of a well publicised release. Following the examples of the US studios, which regard by many as a mistake. Although the franchises all included a distributor, the emphasis is on production. Between them the franchises stem to produce some 60 films over three years.

The recently report of the Government's film policy review group, pointed out

these dangers and suggested a number of measures to improve the development, distribution, exhibition and marketing of British film. But although many in the industry welcome the review group's findings, they point out that they conflict with the franchises.

Tim Bevan, of Working Title production company, said: "Unfortunately the previous administration did not institute a full review of film policy, but instead launched the franchises, which are production led. If they had instituted a review, as this administration had, there would probably have been no need for the franchises. If distribution and exhibition are locked after, the conditions will then be created for productions to prosper without the need for an injection of lottery funds."

Bean had 398 prints, taking £15.9 million by the end of the last financial year. There were 378 prints of the Full Monty helping it towards takings of £22 million in Britain, and 373 prints of *Evita*, which took £13.9 million. The figures bear out the fears of many film industry observers that the emphasis on production will merely lead to more films that will never be seen. The award exactly a year ago of £92 million of national lottery money to three film franchises is now regarded by many as a mistake. Although the franchises all included a distributor, the emphasis is on production. Between them the franchises stem to produce some 60 films over three years.

Confidential memo identifies tobacco firm's consultant on the Lancet

Clare Dyer Legal Correspondent

THE paid consultant to the US tobacco giant, Philip Morris, alleged to have infiltrated the Lancet was Peter Skrabanek, associate professor of community health at Trinity College, Dublin, according to clues in a confidential memo from the firm's lawyers. The claim in the 1990 memo released on the Internet that

an editor was in the pay of the company has shocked the scientific establishment and embarrassed the journal.

Dr Skrabanek, a chain smoker who died from prostate cancer, aged 53, in 1994, was not an editor of the Lancet but was a regular contributor and wrote a number of editorials.

An epidemiologist, he held views against the grain of conventional medical thinking and disputed the idea that

many diseases were preventable.

The memo, discovered during a huge American lawsuit against the tobacco industry, outlines the progress of the secret "whitecoat project", under which Philip Morris recruited scientists to cast doubt on the link between passive smoking and respiratory problems. It says one of the consultants has published a book, *Follies and Fallacies in Medicine*, "exposing the

vagaries of medical truisms". The book was co-written by Dr Skrabanek and James McCormick, emeritus professor of community health at Trinity. Prof McCormick said yesterday: "I have never had a cheque from Philip Morris."

Asked if Dr Skrabanek had received money from a tobacco company, he said: "Peter may have done. I don't know. We both knew there were people in the tobacco industry... who thought our

views were less inimical to their products than others."

Robin Fox, editor of the Lancet from 1980 to 1996, said he thought it "very likely" Dr Skrabanek was the consultant referred to. Asked if he knew he was a paid consultant to a tobacco company, he replied: "Good God, no."

Dr Skrabanek's obituary in the *Times* described him as "an acute critic of modern medical humbug" who had "many admirers".

Japan paid Britons less than other war victims

John Ezard

COMPENSATION negotiated by Britain for victims of Japanese atrocities after the second world war was vastly lower than the sums later obtained by other countries, new research indicated yesterday.

The Philippines got nearly 50 times as much, the United States 40 times more and Korea 26 times more. Even Vietnam and Singapore did twice as well as Britain, which was one of the main combatants in the war and had 50,000 soldiers and 20,000 civilians in Japanese captivity.

About 15,000 British soldiers and 2,000 civilians died from brutality or appalling living conditions. Last night Keith Martin, leader of 1,700 surviving civilians, appealed to the Prime Minister, Tony Blair, to discuss the "scandalous" figures with Japan's prime minister, Ryutaro Hashimoto, when they meet during this weekend's G8 summit in Birmingham.

Downing Street said Mr Blair would hold talks with Mr Hashimoto to try to ensure a trouble-free state visit to Britain for Emperor Akihito on May 26. War veterans plan to demonstrate at all 15 official functions during the visit to press for extra compensation of £14,000 each.

The new figures show that 11 countries negotiated higher settlements than Britain between the mid-1950s and the early 1960s. The British treaty - agreed in 1951 and kept deliberately low because the Japanese economy was still devastated - was for £4 million. This gave ex-prisoners of war £81 each.

After 1951, the first countries to get higher settlements than Britain were Burma and Switzerland. As reported in yesterday's *Guardian*, recently disclosed Foreign Office papers acknowledged this in 1955. Although the British govern-

ment at the time decided not to reopen the 1951 treaty, a Treasury note stressed: "We retain our freedom to use this legal entitlement to claim against Japan."

But successive British governments did not use this freedom. Earlier this month, a Junior Foreign Office minister, Derek Fitchett, said in reply to veteran pressure: "It is impossible for us to open that treaty."

The figures were unearthed from official papers by Martin Day, the war victims' solicitor, who has sent them to Mr Fitchett.

They show that in 1956 the Philippines got \$550 million (some £196 million at the then exchange rate); in 1958 Indonesia got \$223.08 million (£80 million); in 1959 Vietnam got \$89 million (£14 million); in 1962 the USA got \$490 million (£175 million); in 1965 Korea got \$300 million (£107 million); and in 1967 Singapore and Malaysia each got \$25 million (£8.9 million).

Don says university is 'dumbing down' to boost pass rates

John Carew Education Editor

A UNIVERSITY lecturer claimed yesterday that dumbing down of academic standards is reaching crisis proportions as undergraduates are allowed to pass marks as low as 13 out of 100.

Brian Dodds, a maths lecturer at Heriot-Watt university in Edinburgh, complained to his ruling senate that standards are being allowed to slide as a result of a deliberate policy to cut the student drop-out rate.

"The adulteration of the assessment process and the associated dumbing down of modules has reached crisis level in the mathematics department," he said. "This is all the more serious because of the importance of mathematics in many science and engineering disciplines in the university."

The university was founded in 1966 and was recently rated one of the best in Britain for maths research. Yesterday it vigorously denied any general reduction in standards, but promised to investigate the allegations about particular maths modules.

Dr Dodds gave examples of changes in exam marking to achieve dramatic cuts in the failure rate. "In one maths module an original failure rate of about 46 per cent becomes a more presentable 28 per cent by simply lowering

the pass mark to 24 out of 100," he said.

One candidate passed after getting 13 out of 100 in an exam that counted for 80 per cent of the module - a component of the undergraduate degree programme. This was achieved by revising the mark upwards and adding a high score for continuous assessment of the student's progress during the course.

Dr Dodds said: "Students in their first and second years are being put through in a false way. It is a cancer in the university... there is pressure on us to pass them because we can't, politically, throw half of them out."

"Everybody is trying to get the numbers [of student enrolments] and we can't get the quality in maths. Half the intake is good but the other half is to fill our quotas. They are scraping the bottom of the barrel and the only way to handle it is by devices to pass them, such as continuous assessment and scaling up the marks by varying degrees."

He said the policy originated from a memorandum in February 1996 in which Alistair MacFarlane, the former principal, said the university might lose funding if it did not "achieve an immediate improvement to a pass rate of 90 per cent for each module".

Heads of department were instructed to change the syllabus, teaching and assessment methods if necessary to achieve that goal. "Where there is insufficient improvement within a reasonable

period, those members of staff concerned will be required to participate in a programme to assist in gaining an increased awareness of the problems and their possible solutions," he warned.

Charles Brown, the vice-principal, said the university made a big effort to reduce its drop-out rate by helping students come up to standard. "What we don't do is fiddle with the system in the way Dr Dodds reckons has been done in his department."

He said the lecturer's allegations would be investigated within the maths department and by the university's quality forum. "Frankly I don't know if there is any truth in what he says. If so, our examiner system should have flagged it up."

A student passing with 13 out of 100 would "signal a major problem", but the university authorities had no evidence that this occurred.

Art schools have reacted with fury to claims by the lecturers' union that they were "machos" institutions and failed to promote women, writes Donald MacLeod. The Association of University Teachers today pledges to name and shame universities and colleges with few, or no, female professors or senior academics. Some of the worst offenders were art schools and fine arts departments, claimed David Trieman, the union's general secretary. "They are some of the most macho and male-dominated," he said.

The People vs Suharto inc

All in the family

The dynasty

President Suharto and his six children have an estimated net worth of \$40 billion, equal to roughly half the country's gross domestic product. Their influence flows to nearly every capsule of Indonesian life, they control assets from oil and electricity to planes, cars, toll roads and media.

Sons



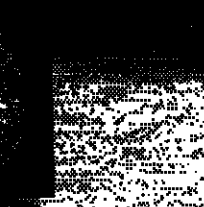
Son
Purnomo
Eldest son
Along with Bambang largely owns petrochemical sector



Son
Bambang
Second son
Controls PT Citra Marga Nusantara, powerful toll road operator



Son
Pudyanto
Third son
Controls PT Citra Marga Nusantara, powerful toll road operator



Son
Tommy
Fourth son
Controls PT Citra Marga Nusantara, powerful toll road operator

and daughters



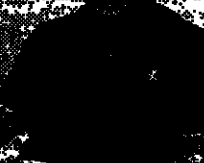
Daughter
Siti Hardijanti Rukmana
Eldest daughter
Controls PT Citra Marga Nusantara, powerful toll road operator



Daughter
Siti Hardijanti Rukmana
Second daughter
Controls PT Citra Marga Nusantara, powerful toll road operator



Daughter
Siti Hardijanti Rukmana
Third daughter
Controls PT Citra Marga Nusantara, powerful toll road operator



Daughter
Siti Hardijanti Rukmana
Fourth daughter
Controls PT Citra Marga Nusantara, powerful toll road operator



Looters ransack a shop during rioting in Jakarta yesterday. Mobs focused their rage on the Suharto family's business empire. PHOTOGRAPH: CHARLES D'HARAPAK

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Dixons
There's a Great Deal going on

Furious Jakarta mobs target the Suhartos' wealth

FAMILY/Nick Cumming-Bruce
on what nepotism can buy

THE flames that razed the home of a leading business crony of President Suharto as mob fury swept Jakarta yesterday also pointed the way for what could become an organised popular assault on the vast wealth amassed by Mr Suharto's rapacious family. It may have been street rowdies who ransacked and torched Liem Sioe Liong's house in one of many spasms of mob fury against Indonesia's small but disproportionately wealthy ethnic Chinese community. But millions of Indonesians know him as a lynchpin in the Suharto family business empire, which is thought to be worth many billions of dollars and to dwarf fortunes accumulated by despots such as the Marcos family in the Philippines and Mobutu Sese Seko of former Zaire.

Anger against Mr Suharto's flagrant nepotism runs so deep that to gain popularity, any government replacing the 76-year old dictator may have to reclaim state assets and unravel the lucrative monopolies set up by Suharto family members and cronies. Jakarta mobs seemed to start dismantling the family empire yesterday when they attacked branches of the Bank Central Asia, Indonesia's biggest private bank, part-owned by Mr Liem and two of Mr Suharto's children. Had the angry crowds completely destroyed the bank, they would barely have disturbed an empire whose tentacles embrace all sectors of Indonesia's economy and touch almost every facet of daily life, and then stretch abroad around Asia.

An obvious early target for reformers would be the exemption granted to Mr Suharto's second son, Bambang Trihatmodjo, his younger brother, Hutomo Mandeladiputra, widely known as Tommy, and several associates which made them the only Indonesians outside the state oil company, Pertamina, allowed to export oil and gas. Huge profits from oil exports have helped finance the Suharto children's expansion into, among other things, pipelines and a fleet of tankers to carry the liquefied natural gas monopoly by Tommy. Analysts say that Bambang, working mainly through a conglomerate known as Bimantara which he founded 16 years ago, has built up a web of more than 140 companies. Before the onset of Asia's financial turmoil last year, the net worth of the companies was estimated at more than \$1.2 billion (£720 million). Assets on this scale enabled Bambang to raise \$1 billion dollars to produce saloon cars. But he lost out to the more flamboyant Tommy, who got the fatherly nod to produce a "national car" made completely in South Korea but somehow exempt from taxes and duties payable on other vehicle imports. Tommy's interests cover a conglomerate, Humpuss, and an array of 60 companies worth hundreds of millions of dollars. They include the first private airline licensed locally and a hugely profitable monopoly on the production of clove used in the manufacture of local cigarettes. But, on some estimates, Tommy's interests are dwarfed by those of his younger sister, Siti Hardijanti Rukmana. Her 100-odd companies cover activities from building to managing toll roads. Add in assets of others in the Suharto clan — like another brother who owns a bank and a young family member allegedly involved in the ecstasy trade — and estimates of the family fortune soar to \$15 billion. That figure was reportedly applied by the United States Central Intelligence Agency a decade ago. Preserving the family fortune will be the preoccupation of any rearguard action by Mr Suharto. But the flames in Jakarta yesterday suggested a different outcome.

Ministers attacked over military export licences

ARMS SALES/Richard Norton-Taylor
and Lucy Ward on Britain's 'ethical' policy

BITISH arms sales to Indonesia were attacked yesterday by MPs of all parties as it was disclosed that the Government had granted 56 military export licences and Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, acknowledged that British equipment was being used against demonstrators. But secrecy over arms exports makes it impossible to tell exactly what Labour has cleared for sale to the Indonesian regime. Broad categories cleared for export included small arms, machine guns, bombs, missiles, riot control and toxicological agents, surveillance systems, "armoured goods", electronic equipment specially designed for military use, and aircraft. The first in a new batch of 16 British Aerospace Hawk aircraft are being delivered to Indonesia this month. Barbara Roche, the trade

minister, told the Labour backbencher Ann Clywd last month that the nature of the arms could not be broken down "as the equipment covered... could be used by military, paramilitary, or police end-users". Ms Clywd, who demanded a freeze on all military sales to Indonesia, said yesterday: "The mind boggles that we ever sent any of these things."

In addition to the 56 new licences, the Government at the end of last year cleared the sale to Indonesia of armoured cars and water cannon made by GKN and Alvis light tanks, as well as the Hawk, approved by the previous Conservative administration. GKN brochures describe the armoured cars as "designed specifically for internal security and public order roles". Mr Cook said last year that it was neither "practical nor realistic" to stop the sales. But Whitehall officials told lawyers for the World Development Movement that whether or not to revoke licences were "matters for political judgement". The Government also disclosed earlier this year that it was training 10 Indonesian army officers, some of whom are believed to be in the country's special forces, at the Royal Military College in Shrivenham, Wiltshire, and the University of Hull. Mr Cook yesterday defended his "ethical" foreign policy. The Government had made clear it would not sell equipment used for internal repression or in East Timor, he said. But he told BBC Radio: "Sadly it appears to be the case that some of the equipment being used against those rioters is sold from Britain. It would not have been sold under the new criteria we brought in."

Amnesty International and the Campaign Against the Arms Trade called for an immediate end to military exports to Indonesia. The campaign against the arms trade said: "Indonesia's actions, which pose an immediate and grave threat to Paki-

Defiant D

basks in

Defiant D basks in... The image shows a person, likely a member of the Suharto family, standing in front of a building. The person is wearing a dark jacket and a light-colored shirt. The building has a sign that says "Defiant D". The person is looking towards the camera with a slight smile. The background is a plain wall.

The Guardian Friday May 15 1998

Islamabad says tests just 'short of a declaration of war' • New Delhi celebrates • CIA failings blamed

Pakistan dismisses sanctions

Richard Gaspin in Islamabad and Ian Black in London

PAKISTAN yesterday dismissed as "irrelevant" the international sanctions punishing India for its nuclear tests but ruled out a hasty response despite evidence that it was preparing to carry out its own as soon as this weekend.

The foreign minister, Gohar Ayub Khan, described India's testing as just "short of a declaration of war" hours before an American delegation flew in to try to persuade Islamabad not to go ahead. Asked about a test, he said: "We have the capability to do it anytime."

The US assistant secretary

of state Strobe Talbott and General Anthony Zinni, commander of US forces in the Middle East and south-western Asia, are expected to repeat President Bill Clinton's message that Pakistan should show restraint at such a critical time.

Pakistan did not appear to have high expectations of today's G8 summit of leading industrial democracies, chaired by Tony Blair, the prime minister, in Birmingham, although Britain announced last night that it was recalling its high commissioner from New Delhi.

Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, said Sir David Gore-Booth would be holding consultations on "how Britain and Europe can effectively bring home to the government of India our anxiety at the damage to the non-proliferation regime and to the stability of the region."

Mr Cook said the Indian prime minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, in a letter he described as a "modest opening

to dialogue", had indicated he might be ready to adhere to "some parts" of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

Pakistan's prime minister, Nawaz Sharif, told Mr Clinton on Wednesday that Pakistan had no option but to "take appropriate measures to protect its sovereignty and security".

Mr Sharif is under enormous domestic pressure to allow scientists to conduct Pakistan's first test. Pakistan and India have already fought three wars since independence in 1947 and it is almost

inconceivable that he would allow India openly to deploy nuclear weapons without responding.

The odds are thought to be in favour of Pakistan carrying out a test soon, whatever the threats against it. According to US reports yesterday, spy satellites and agents have detected signs that preparations are under way for a nuclear test in Baluchistan.

But a Pakistani foreign ministry spokesman refused to be drawn, instead questioning why US intelligence agencies had been so quick to come out with this information when they had failed to give warning about the tests carried out by India.

Japan, meanwhile, said that it would withdraw its envoy to New Delhi in protest. "I have ordered the suspension of new yen loans to India," said the prime minister, Ryutaro Hashimoto, shortly before boarding a plane to Britain for the G8 summit.

Tokyo has also cancelled a meeting of India's main donor nations, which it was scheduled to host in Tokyo on June 30, and called for a statement at the G8 summit condemning India's actions. Hiroshima and Nagasaki are the only cities in the world to have experienced the power of nuclear bombs used in war.

North Korea yesterday again gave warning that it could resume its nuclear programme, when its ambassador to Beijing accused the US of stalling on a promise to deliver reactors. Under a landmark accord with Washington in 1994, Pyongyang agreed to mothball graphite reactors capable of producing weapons-grade material in exchange for two safer light-water reactors and interim fuel deliveries.

Forest fires rage in Mexico

THE worst forest fires for half a century are burning across Mexico, threatening communities and virgin rainforests and causing smoke-hazed cities in the United States to issue health warnings, environmental officials said yesterday.

At least 46 people have died fighting the fires, which were caused by hot weather and low rainfall. The flames of almost 10,000 fires have been fanned by high winds. There are fears that the fires will destroy vast swathes of the Chimalapas jungle, the largest virgin rainforest in the region.

Smoke had hung over several cities, forcing authorities to close airports and schools, and has drifted across the Gulf of Mexico to Miami and Houston, where people were warned to stay indoors to avoid breathing smoky air. — *Andrew Dornie, Mexico City.*

US arms heiress off the hook

SUSAN CUMMINGS, the daughter of one of the world's biggest arms dealers, has been sentenced to 60 days in jail for shooting her Argentinian polo-playing boyfriend, Roberto Villegas.

Cummings, aged 35, was convicted of the voluntary manslaughter of Villegas at her Virginia mansion in September 1997. Ms Cummings said she was "very happy" after receiving the sentence and a \$200 fine. Prosecutors had claimed she planned to shoot Villegas as he sat at the breakfast table and then cut herself to make the crime look like self-defence.

Ms Cummings, the daughter of the late billionaire arms dealer, Samuel Cummings, said she shot her former lover four times after he came at her with a knife. — *Martin Kettle, Washington.*

Prisoners 'abused' in France

THE European Committee for the Prevention of Torture yesterday expressed concern about how French police treat detained persons and the living conditions they must endure.

"A significant proportion of people met by the delegation claimed they were being, or had recently been, badly treated by police," the committee said in a 100-page report.

The report noted that claims of abuse were particularly frequent in Paris and in the southern cities of Marseille and Montpellier. Most victims were of African and Arab origin, and/or suspects in drug cases. Abuse ranged from being slapped, punched, beaten with truncheons or tightly handcuffed behind the back for long periods.

In several cases, the delegation found medical evidence to back the claims. Its report found living conditions for detainees to be unsatisfactory. — *AP, Strasbourg.*

Rights leader out of danger

TURKEY'S leading human rights activist, Akin Birdal, was yesterday largely out of danger of dying from injuries sustained two days ago in a shooting by unknown assailants, doctors said.

"We have to be cautious, but we can say the danger of death has decreased to a large extent," hospital chief Dr Tefik Ali Kucukbas said.

The president of the Human Rights Association (IHDA) was shot in the chest and leg by two gunmen in his Ankara office on Tuesday. The shooting came after the media reported accusations by a captured Kurdish rebel defector linking him to the outlawed Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK). Mr Birdal had received death threats and rights groups blamed the shooting on these reports.

IHD officials accused anti-terrorist police of obstructing the investigation into the attack by inadequately searching for evidence. Mr Birdal has accused the state of conducting a "dirty war" against PKK guerrillas. — *Reuters, Ankara.*

Nato vote splits government

THE Italian prime minister, Romano Prodi, was preparing yesterday for a showdown that could end in the government's collapse, after Italy's hardline communists voted against Nato expansion.

After voting against Nato expansion towards eastern Europe in the senate, Fausto Bertinotti's Communist Refoundation party said it would repeat its "no" in the Chamber of Deputies where the government counts on its votes for a majority.

A last-minute appeal by Mr Prodi before the senate vote failed to convince Mr Bertinotti to reverse his position. Political commentators said it would be a blow to Mr Prodi's government if he had to rely on the opposition in the lower house vote. — *AP, Rome.*

Berlin recalls cold war airlift

GERMANY'S Chancellor Helmut Kohl applauds as President Bill Clinton shakes hands with second world war veteran pilot Gail Halvorsen during ceremonies to mark the 50th anniversary of the Berlin Airlift, when the allied air forces dropped food and other supplies to beleaguered Berliners.

Thousands gathered at the city's Tempelhof airport yesterday to commemorate the airlift, which came a year after Stalin sealed off West Berlin and restricted Western access to three air corridors.

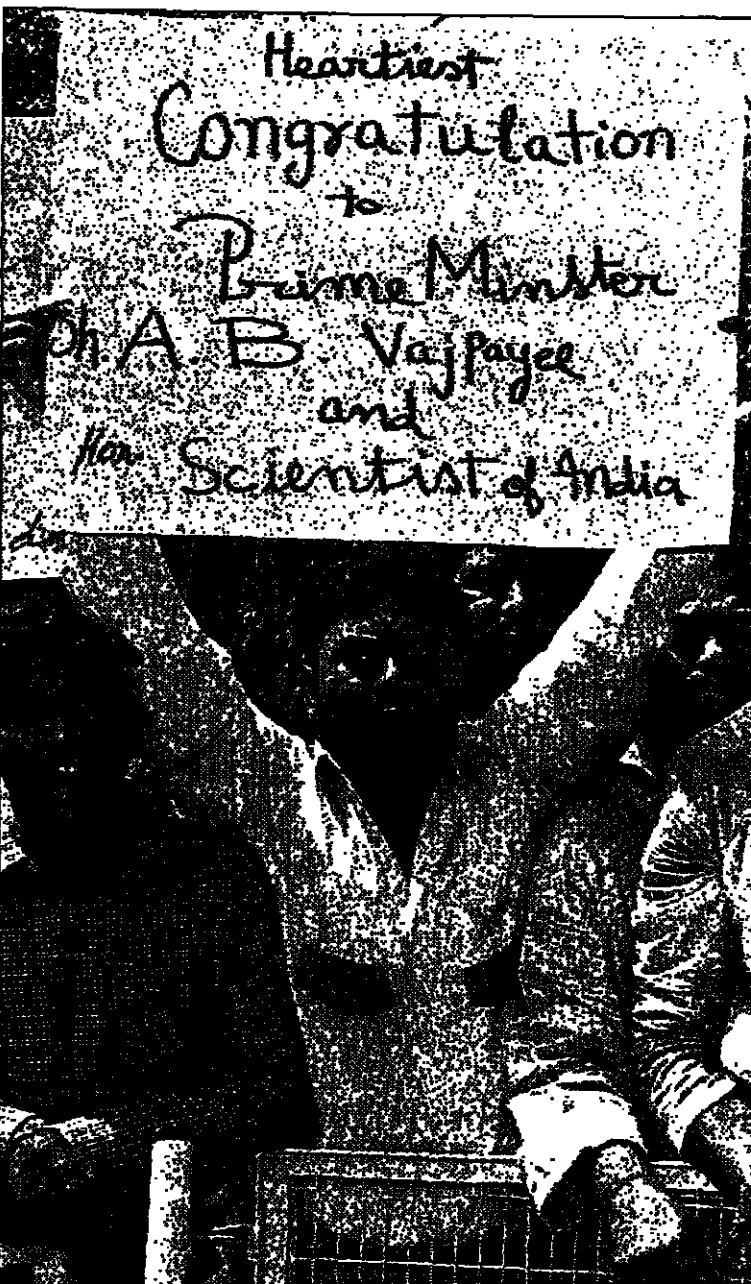
Mr Halvorsen related how he flew in 20,000lb of flour but then realised that "freedom was more important than flour". Between June 1948 and the following May, planes landed at Tempelhof every 90 seconds to drop supplies that included sweets tied to handmade parachutes. — *PHOTOGRAPH BY GARY HERSHORN*

Astronomers to keep quiet

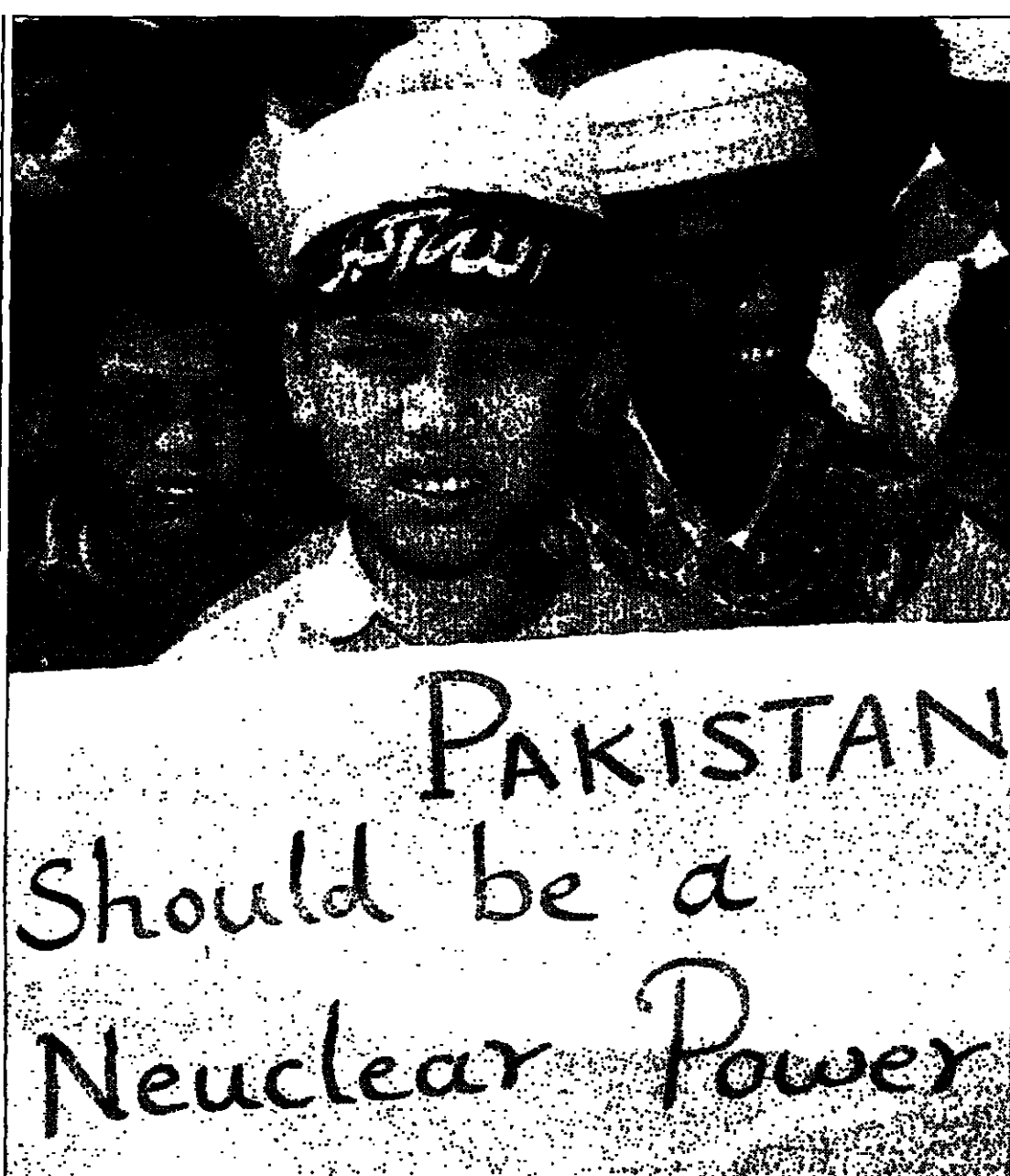
IF STARGAZERS catch sight of an asteroid that might be on a crash course for Earth, the United States government wants them to keep it quiet about it — for at least 72 hours.

The new procedures are designed to avoid panic from mistaken reports of doomsday. Astronomers funded by NASA have agreed for now to keep asteroid and comet discoveries to themselves for 48 hours while more detailed calculations are made. The findings would then go to NASA, which would wait another 24 hours before going public. — *AP, Los Angeles.*

Signs of trouble



Supporters (left) of India's prime minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, carry placards and shout pro-nuclear slogans yesterday outside his residence in New Delhi. A Pakistani student (right) from an Islamic school demonstrates his support for a South Asian arms race during a protest in Multan against India's test blasts



Defiant Delhi government basks in nuclear afterglow

But the euphoria may be shortlived, writes **Suzanne Goldenberg**

INDIA'S Hindu nationalist-led governing coalition was basking yesterday in the euphoria that has followed the country's five nuclear tests, refusing to be ruffled by economic sanctions or the prospect of a South Asian arms race.

"We did what we did after seeing our security concerns," said Pramod Mahajan, political adviser to the prime minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, of the Bharatiya Janata Party.

"Others are free to see to their security concerns," he added.

Far from being daunted, the government has declared tomorrow a day of national celebration for this week's tests — a defiant rebuff of the international outrage which greeted the tests.

The United States, Japan, Australia and other countries suspended aid and contracts, and the World Bank cancelled the annual donors' meeting for India, which last year pledged \$6.7 billion (\$4 billion) in aid.

Mr Vajpayee's BJP planned another, more private celebration for party supporters at his home this morning, where he was expected to reassure Indians that he had not miscalculated the price India would have to pay for its moment of nationalistic pride.

But the first signs of Indian hesitancy were evident early yesterday after Pakistan's ambassador to the disarmament conference in Geneva, Munir Akram, said: "India's actions, which pose an immediate and grave threat to Pakistan's security, will not go unanswered."

Reports based on information gleaned from spy satellites and military officials said Pakistan was preparing for an underground nuclear test of its own, possibly as early as Sunday.

Officially, the Indian government was dismissive of sanctions. The commerce and energy ministers argued that India could

largely silent since the tests, indicated yesterday that they knew the euphoria would be shortlived. They admitted to a risk that middle-class India, which has largely cheered the tests, could curse them as India's isolation grew and economic sanctions affected business opportunities.

Yesterday, the rupee slid to a record low, before closing near its worst at 40.50 against the US dollar.

For the moment, public approval of the tests — at 80 per cent, according to some polls — has made a government that once seemed weak look beyond reproach. And Mr Vajpayee has emerged looking like a decisive and strong leader.

His renewed confidence, means he may now be able to win over regional parties which, while refusing to join the Congress in opposition,

have yet to support the BJP-led government openly.

Virtually no political party, bar the communists, has dared to criticise the tests, and only the former prime minister, I.K. Gujral, has publicly voiced fears about international isolation.

"You will only push the outside world to think of you as a chauvinist country," Mr Gujral said in a television interview yesterday, pleading with Mr Vajpayee to tone down tomorrow's celebrations.

But he also claimed his government's share of credit for the tests. "This file was on our table all the time," he said.

The Congress party leader, Sonia Gandhi, said yesterday that "every Indian stands united" on the national question. "We feel the pride in the achievement of our nuclear scientists and engineers for putting India's nuclear capability in the front rank."

Meanwhile, an obscure group, believed to be an ally of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, which forms the Hindu chauvinist backbone of the BJP, announced it would protest outside the offices of American firms, forcing them to down shutters.

The group held its first demonstration in the western city of Pune outside the offices of a cellular phone company which is in a partnership with AT&T, the American firm.

Police moved in to control the protests, and an AT&T spokesman said: "It was an outburst of emotion, and we think an isolated incident."

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Israeli riot police (left) fire rubber bullets at Palestinians during clashes yesterday in East Jerusalem. Palestinians (right) carry the body of a protester shot dead by Israeli troops in the Gaza Strip



PHOTOGRAPHS: DAVID SILVERMAN, AHMED JADALLAH

US turns up pressure on Netanyahu

THE CLINTON administration tightened the pressure on Israel to make Middle East territorial concessions yesterday after Benjamin Netanyahu's Washington visit was undermined by the worst West Bank violence for almost two years.

The Israeli prime minister met the US secretary of state, Madeleine Albright, for the second time in successive days, as Mrs Albright again postponed her departure to join President Bill Clinton in

Europe in an attempt to push the Israeli leader closer to the negotiating table with the Palestinian leader, Yasser Arafat. After the first 90-minute meeting on Wednesday, state department officials said the differences between the two sides over the United States-backed Israeli withdrawal plans had not been overcome. But yesterday's meeting was seen in Washington as a sign that Mrs Albright expected to make progress towards persuading Israel to agree to withdraw from 13 per cent of

the West Bank. Mr Netanyahu has said he would agree to 9 per cent. A third meeting today had not been ruled out, officials said. Yesterday's violence in Ramallah and other parts of the West Bank, in which at least six Palestinians were killed by Israeli troops, increased the pressure on Mr Netanyahu and the US congressional Republican leadership, who intend to use the Israeli leader's visit as an opportunity to mount an attack on the administration.

Martin Kettle in Washington on the push for Israeli concessions

On Wednesday, the House of Representatives Speaker Newt Gingrich accused Mrs Albright of being "the agent for the Palestinians". Yesterday another Republican, Jim Saxton, introduced a resolution urging the administration not to push Israel to make concessions it said would damage its security. "For the administration to push for something the

only peace that can endure is a peace that can be defended," Mr Netanyahu told the Institute for Near East Policy. In the speech, the first in a packed five-day schedule of lobbying and fund-raising, Mr Netanyahu said the differences between Israel and the US over the extent of withdrawals from the West Bank makes a difference for our lives. Refusing to specify how much land he might be willing to give up, the prime minister said: "For us, the issue is not how many slices

we have but the total amount we are slicing." Small differences on the map could have huge security ramifications, he added. "We're prepared to redeploy from additional land," Mr Netanyahu said, "but we cannot do so while compromising our security, because we know that if we compromise our security, the peace will collapse." Mr Netanyahu said the peace agreements with Egypt and Jordan had succeeded because Israel security had been protected. But the 1993

Oslo accords for Israeli West Bank withdrawals "failed miserably" on that count. Mr Netanyahu, who is caught between pressure from the US to make concessions and from his rightwing cabinet to stand firm, played down the differences with Washington, calling them "disagreements around the dinner table in the family". His spokesman, David Barlian, said the talks were held in "a productive atmosphere" and that both sides were striving for a settlement.

Yeltsin tells Nato to keep out of Baltics

Russia's leader, in an exclusive interview with **James Meek**, hints that he may yet run for a third term as president

THE RUSSIAN president, Boris Yeltsin, warned in an exclusive Guardian interview yesterday that Nato would cross a perilous "red line" if it invited the Baltic states or Ukraine to join the alliance.

The 67-year-old leader, who arrives in Britain today for the G8 summit in Birmingham, hinted that he was considering running for a third term and admitted that he must accept responsibility for Russia's troubled post-Soviet years.

Mr Yeltsin's emphatic drawing of the line for Nato exposes the gulf between Russia and the other industrial democracies in the G8. Six are Nato members and the seventh, Japan, is a military ally of the US.

Asked what steps Russia would take if Ukraine and the Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania were invited to join the alliance, Mr Yeltsin said he hoped the West would be "realistic" enough not to do it. "In Nato expansion, there is a red line for Russia which should not be crossed. Otherwise European stability might not withstand the new tension," he said.

The Baltic trio want entry to Nato and the European Union, with an EU invitation for Estonia the only result so far. Ukraine, which has a Russian naval base in Crimea, is divided. Mr Yeltsin said he wanted to see a "Great Europe", including Russia, as one power centre in a multipolar world — one not dominated by Washington. But he denied that the recent meeting near Moscow between Russia, France and Germany was an attempt to exclude an over-Americanised Britain from European councils. "Russian-British partnership has a special value for us," he said.

Mr Yeltsin has in the past said he will not stand for re-election in 2000. Despite doubts that his candidacy would be constitutional, there is scepticism over whether a man who has clung so tenaciously to power and life would step down.

Asked why he was not planning to run in 2000, he said: "There are enough difficult problems in the country. They have priority. There are still two years to go before the elections. So I wouldn't want to

linger over this issue now." Mr Yeltsin said some politicians had launched themselves "too early" into the presidential campaign — an apparent reference to ex-premier Victor Chernomyrdin and retired paratrooper general Alexander Lebed, who is on course to win a regional governorship in Siberian elections on Sunday.

Asked whether he thought Gen Lebed or the similarly patriotic anti-communist Moscow mayor, Yuri Luzhkov, would make worthy successors, Mr Yeltsin said: "Two years is a very long time in Russia. In

seen on television, meets people and gave an Internet interview on Wednesday, the president remains a remote, enigmatic figure. He declined to meet the Guardian and answered questions in writing. His most considered response concerned his place in history as the man who presided over attempts to lead the prostrate, uncomprehending Russia out of the purgatory of post-communist chaos.

Asked who should bear responsibility for the fact that only now, seven years after the fall of the USSR, was Russia's economy beginning to revive, he agreed there had been mistakes, but said this was not the time to apportion blame.

"Russia lived for many decades under a totalitarian regime and in a planned economy. Nonetheless, in seven years the central planning system has been completely dismantled," he said. Despite the pain, industrial growth and low inflation had been achieved.

"As for responsibility, no one can avoid that. I believe that, in the end, the greatest responsibility for what happens in the country lies with the president."



"I believe that, in the end, the greatest responsibility for what happens in the country lies with the president"

Short attacks Amnesty 'carping'

Owen Bowcott

CLARE SHORT, the international development secretary, has attacked human rights pressure groups, including Amnesty, for spending too much time "carping" about illegal arrests and torture while ignoring health, education and economic issues.

In a characteristically forthright intervention aimed at broadening public debate over Britain's relations with the Third World, Ms Short criticised the narrow focus of the human rights lobby. Her comments, in an interview for Trade Union Alert, an Amnesty International magazine, will surprise charities set up to monitor extrajudicial killings and disappearances in developing countries.

"The discourse on human rights has got stuck in a denunciation of abuses of civil and political rights," Ms Short suggests. "While I think this is important, it is very carping and does not see human rights as work in progress."

"Most of the people who talk about protecting human rights, including Amnesty, have almost forgotten that the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights includes the right to a livelihood, to health care, to education and so on. We are in danger of slipping into thinking that human rights is all about people not being beaten up in police stations... Ignoring the problems of poverty and talking only about political prisoners would, she warned, result in charities "losing an audience in a large chunk of the world".

Ms Short has pledged to boost Britain's overseas aid budget and supports an international campaign to halve the number of people living in poverty by the year 2015. On a recent trip to Uganda, she was dismayed to receive a briefing from Amnesty which "seemed to treat the Lord's Resistance Army — which



Clare Short: forthright intervention in debate



Pierre Sane of Amnesty: prodding oil companies



Mary Robinson: thinks her group has 'lost the plot'

kidnaps children, and turns boys into soldiers and the girls into sex slaves — and the government of Uganda as equally bad people."

She said: "Of course all sides commit human rights abuses in a war, but I remember thinking: 'I can't quite believe this. The one side is so much worse than the other'."

She added: "Governments of the [developed] world would not go around hectoring poor countries." The new UN high commissioner for human rights, Mary Robinson, has made similar comments. Last year she suggested her organisation had "lost the plot". Western countries should move away from lobbying about civil and political rights, she said, and focus more on economic and social issues.

Some campaign groups already share these concerns. The center of African Rights, Rakiya Omar, said she sometimes felt "embarrassed" to say she worked on human rights. "The focus of human rights now... seems to have little to do with the complexity of problems in a poor country."

But Conor Foley, a senior member of Amnesty's campaign team who conducted the interview with Ms Short, said yesterday: "Amnesty supports all the rights con-

tained within the Universal Declaration, both social and economic as well as civil and political. "We are currently running a major campaign to promote the Universal Declaration. We believe that human rights are absolute, and reject arguments about cultural and political relativism."

Earlier this week, Amnesty's secretary-general, Pierre Sane, launched a campaign to persuade oil companies operating in Algeria, Nigeria, Myanmar (Burma) and Colombia to raise human rights issues in those countries. "We have to ensure that those companies will join in the effort to improve the human rights situation in those countries," he said.

Declaration
THE Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the United Nations in December 1948, has 30 Articles. They include:

- Article 3: The right to life, liberty and security.
- Article 5: No one to be subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment.
- Article 9: No one to be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.
- Article 20: The right to peaceful assembly.
- Article 25: The right to a standard of living sufficient for health and well-being, including housing and medical care.
- Article 26: The right to education.

Arson kills ancient tree

John Hooper in Rome

IT WAS A far better symbol of the millennium than any man-made structure could possibly be — a tree believed to have been standing, or rather growing, in the Tuscan countryside for around 2,000 years. For an olive tree, it was immense — 70ft high, with a circumference at the base of 26ft.

Yesterday it was dead — burnt to the ground by arsonists in a matter of hours, most likely to make way for a building or a road. The tree stood in a shallow valley in open countryside near Grosseto. It was believed to have been planted by a descendant of one of the retired legionaries whom Tiberius

Gracchus settled in the area during the second century BC. Known as the oldest olive tree in Europe, it was popular with newly-married couples as a backdrop for their wedding day photographs. The tree had survived for such a long time, the idea was that something of its talent for survival might rub off on the marriage. But it ceased to be a living thing this week. According to local firefighters, all it took was a box of matches and a tin of inflammable liquid, probably kerosene. The reason for the blaze is unknown. But frequently in southern Europe such fires are started to remove protected plants or trees that prevent land from being made available for development. The destruction of the woodland in the hills above Sarno near Naples is thought to have been responsible for last week's mudslides in which as many as 280 people died, after torrential rains sent thick rivers of mud through several towns in the south of the country. The Turin newspaper, La Stampa, which yesterday reported the tree's demise, quoted a local farmer who saw smoke coming from it at first light. "I ran over there. The trunk was already black," he said. "The highest branches had been brought down by their own weight. But they were still green and perfect. It was already dead. I could not believe it. I began to cry."

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Analysis Child support



Kleptocrats who squeeze the poor
12

MR=AG-CB: the algebra of care

That's a simple formula in the headline, lifted from schedule 1 of the Child Support Act. But when it's applied to collecting money from errant fathers, it takes 126 pages to explain it - and that is to the experts. No wonder the Child Support Agency's head is on the block. By **David Brindle**

THE *bidragsgjald*, the Norwegian child maintenance contribution collection agency, has a fearsome reputation for taking no prisoners. But it might take your car. Set up a year before Britain's much-derided Child Support Agency and given powers to seize the worldly goods of recalcitrant "absent" fathers, the tough organisation is getting money out of 90 per cent of men on its books and recouping 80 per cent of the advance payments it makes to their families.

Such performance figures must make British social security ministers green with envy as they wrestle with the seemingly intractable problem of how to rehabilitate the CSA. Reform has been promised and proposals are due this summer. But all the signs are that Whitehall is still some way from settling on a blueprint, realisation having dawned painfully that there is no solution that will get anywhere near satisfying all parties.

Researchers will spend many years delving into quite how Britain ended up with what is, by common consent, an ill-conceived child maintenance system. Politicians of all parties are now queuing up to denigrate and disown legislation passed with bipartisan support under the last government. Tony Blair, the veteran left-wing Labour MP for Chesterfield, told an anti-CSA lobby of Parliament in March: "I've been here 48 years and I've never seen such a rotten piece of legislation as the Child Support Act." The MP, who said he had opposed the act, added: "I've never met anyone who wants to keep it."

Caridwen Roberts, director of the Family Policy Studies Centre, has a theory on how things may have gone wrong. Pointing out that the CSA was modelled on agencies in Australia and parts of the United States, she notes that civil servants apparently paid little or no attention to experience in the non-English-speaking world. Although the *bidragsgjald* was at the time only embryonic, there is scant evidence of any Whitehall analysis of other countries - such as Austria - with settled and successful child maintenance schemes in place.

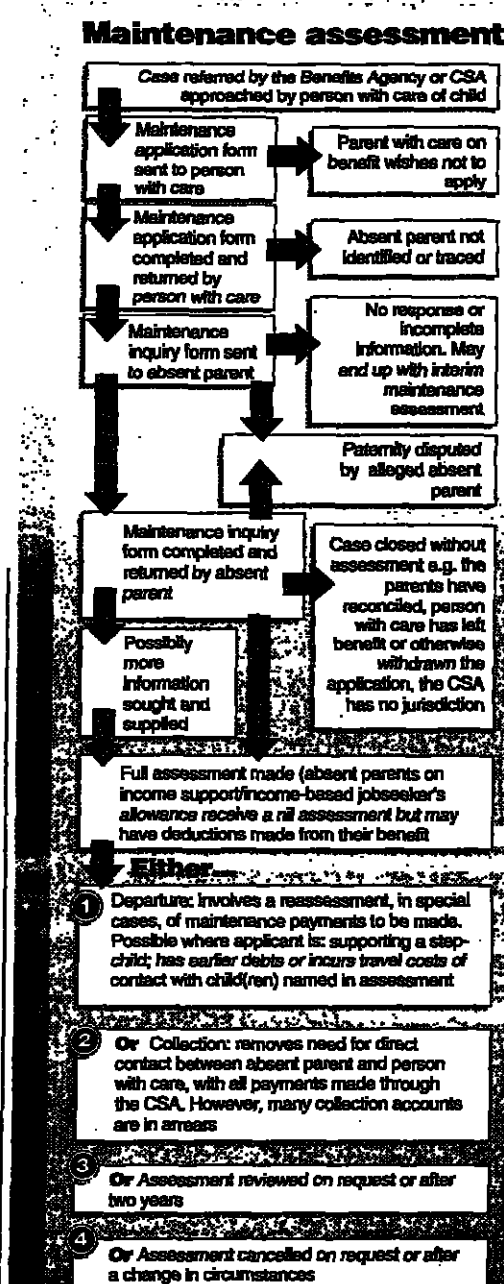
The CSA was devised at breakneck speed after Margaret Thatcher, then prime

minister, suddenly became aware of how many lone mothers were living on income support and how few of them were receiving any money from their former partners. There was both a public expenditure issue - the cost of benefits paid to lone-parent families soared from £1.4 billion in 1982-83 to £7.1 billion in 1992-93 - and a moral one. In an influential discourse on moral values, Thatcher said: "Nearly four out of five lone mothers claiming income support receive no maintenance from the fathers. No father should be able to escape from his responsibility."

Mavis Maclean, senior research fellow at the centre for socio-legal studies at Wolfson College, Oxford, was consultant to the inter-departmental working party which researched the issues. In a new book, she writes: "Progress was rapid, from the first policy announcement in 1990 to the introduction of legislation in February 1991." Intriguingly, she also says that the choice of a child maintenance formula was "the simplest of many decisions" taken at the time.

This will be seen as surprising by many people because it is the undoubted complexity and the perceived unfairness of the formula that lie at the root of much criticism of the system. The formula was based on an approach pioneered in the US state of Wisconsin and later implemented nationwide in Australia. It sought to create a statutory, non-discretionary template for determining liability for maintenance, taking responsibility away from the courts. But its labyrinthine, algebraic structure - it takes 126 pages to explain it in the standard guide for welfare advisers - has left people baffled and its assessments, originally envisaged to average £45-£50 a week for one child, have been regarded by many men as punitive.

CRUCEALLY, the British approach also departed from its American and Australian models in two respects. First, for the 1.1 million lone mothers on income support, there was no incentive to co-operate with the CSA because the Treasury was given first call on any money collected from their former partners. Kate Funder, principal research fellow at



the Australian Institute of Family Studies, says: "In the UK, every dollar paid by non-residential parents is recouped by government; liable relatives have no sense of contributing to their children's well-being and children are no better off."

Second, and perhaps even more damagingly, the CSA was given powers of retrospective enabling it to re-open cases that had been before the courts. Irwin Garfinkel, a Columbia University professor who is regarded as the progenitor of the assessment formula, tells a revealing story of his discussions with Tony Newton, the then British social security secretary who visited him in 1990. "I said whatever you do, don't make it retrospective. I thought he had understood that when he went away I thought we had agreed he would leave it alone."

The rest, as they say, is history. The CSA has managed to become massively unpopular while failing to do what was intended. Average full maintenance assessments are running at less than £21 a week, the formula having twice been moderated in the face of protests. Although the agency has 742,000 cases on its books, according to latest figures published yesterday it has a

backlog of 113,000 waiting for assessment. Meanwhile, 65,000 of those absent parents whose liability has been assessed have paid nothing for three months. Money owed by these liable parents stands at £832 million, with £309 million of this to be paid off by arranged instalments, and only 41 per cent of them are paying assessments in full - although the agency points out that this is the highest compliance figure it has achieved, comparing with only 22 per cent in November 1995.

AS for the CSA's moral mission, Maclean says: "Not surprisingly, it has failed to bring the men of Britain to their senses and stop them from fathering more children than they can afford, as Mrs Thatcher had hoped it would."

The agency, which costs £200 million a year to run and is on its third chief executive, is fighting a desperate rearguard action. It is committed this year to a 60-per-cent increase in the amount of maintenance it collects or arranges and has undertaken to clear all backlogs by next April in an attempt to be more customer-friendly, it

aims to become the first arm of government to work in the evenings and at weekends in the style of a telephone bank.

But the Government is committed to more radical reform. A change of name and a relaunch for the CSA look certain, as there seems no real prospect of returning responsibility for child maintenance to the courts. Beyond that, though, things get tricky. The leading anti-CSA campaign, the National Association for Child Support Action, already has the champagne on ice. Its latest newsletter proclaims: "The End is Nigh!" But the campaign, which has as its stated goal the dismantling of the CSA, is deeply suspicious that ministers will replace the hated and complex maintenance formula with a simple but crude scale by which a liable father would pay a straight percentage of income for each child, irrespective of variables like housing and travel-to-work costs which are taken into account at the moment.

Such a system, says Nacsa, would "allow ministers to pitch figures sufficiently low to defuse opposition, while designing in the opportunity to increase levies with impunity in the years ahead". While the group would accept a simple scale of flat rates

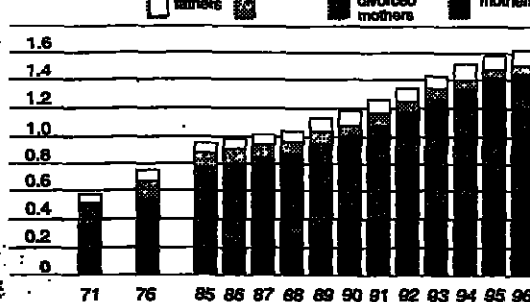
expressed in cash, backed where necessary by mediation and recourse to the courts, it seems that a percentage-based scale would run the risk of a continued campaign of determined opposition.

Such an outcome would be the last thing wanted by MPs, worried as they are by the proverbial bulging postbags of complaints about the CSA. And there would be dismay in other quarters, too, if the Government failed to take the opportunity to do something to improve the deal for mothers: some sort of guaranteed advance payment of maintenance for those not on income support, as in Norway and other countries; and a cash contribution from the money collected for those who are on the benefit, so that the whole payment did not go to the Treasury.

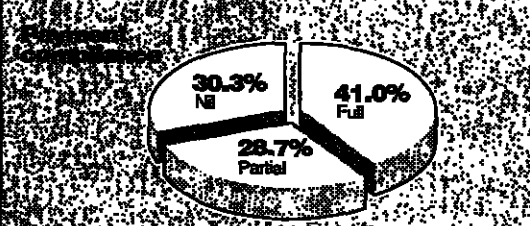
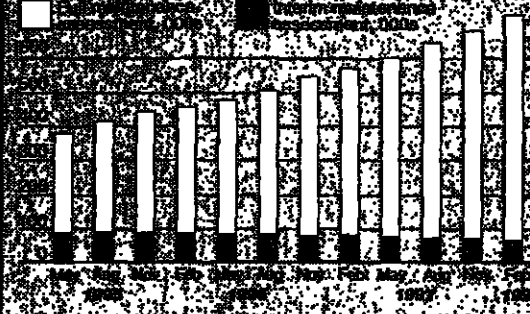
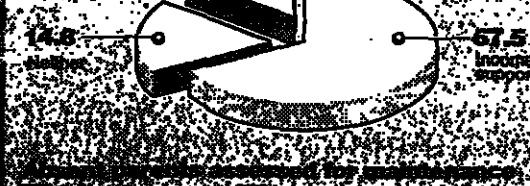
In many ways, reform seems to hold at least as many perils for ministers as soldiering on with the system as it stands. Indeed, there are those who think the politicians should have held their nerve. Garfinkel points out that formula-based child maintenance was equally unpopular at first. In the US, the enabling legislation having passed by only one vote in Congress in 1974 but having been renewed unanimously 10 years later.

Making payments

Lone parents
Number of lone parents, millions



Benefit status of lone parents receiving maintenance, 1995



Some other approaches

1. Sweden Advance child support can be granted if maintenance has not been paid for a prolonged period. The court can then order the father to pay a lump sum or a regular payment. The court can also order the father to pay a lump sum if he is not paying a regular payment.

2. Norway Child support is granted if the father is not paying a regular payment. The court can then order the father to pay a lump sum or a regular payment. The court can also order the father to pay a lump sum if he is not paying a regular payment.

3. Austria Child support is granted if the father is not paying a regular payment. The court can then order the father to pay a lump sum or a regular payment. The court can also order the father to pay a lump sum if he is not paying a regular payment.

4. Germany Child support is granted if the father is not paying a regular payment. The court can then order the father to pay a lump sum or a regular payment. The court can also order the father to pay a lump sum if he is not paying a regular payment.

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Comment

Diary

Matthew Norman

THE Sunshine Boys of the Spectator hit top form. Paul Johnson begins his column by mentioning New York, and then slips, seamlessly, into a rant at the Guardian. Taki George, by contrast, begins with news of New York, and then slips... Oh dear. Only a month ago, my sane and rational friend vowed to quarantine that space from any mention of us while he writes his splendid Guardian book — and now this. A very naughty boy. Meanwhile, on March 22, Paul saved those who "blatantly ignore the sub-judice rules and continue to publish statements and opinions about the (Aitken) case..." Here, however, Paul states that the case for perjury "is not conclusive", and opines that his motives "in practising deception over this (hotel) bill... were honourable". He also excuses Victoria Aitken's mendacious witness statement in terms of her hysteria and "poor memory". An attempt, some might think, at the very kind of jury-influencing at which he so recently rallied himself. Tut, tut. A very, very naughty boy indeed.

ELSEWHERE in that journal, Petronella Wyatt enjoys a triumph... a scoop celebrated in a Spectator press release, no less. Patsy interviews Max Clifford, and breathlessly relates that he's been visited by the Archbishop of Canterbury. "Christian values," she concludes, "have fallen victim to the ravening hunger of the news maw." How true. Only it isn't. Max was teasing her. But let's not be harsh on Patsy (whose reason for interviewing Max, she writes, is that during a recent Cambridge Union speech, "he had admitted to lying"); there was no way the poor lamb or her editor, "Fearless" Frank Johnson, could have guessed.

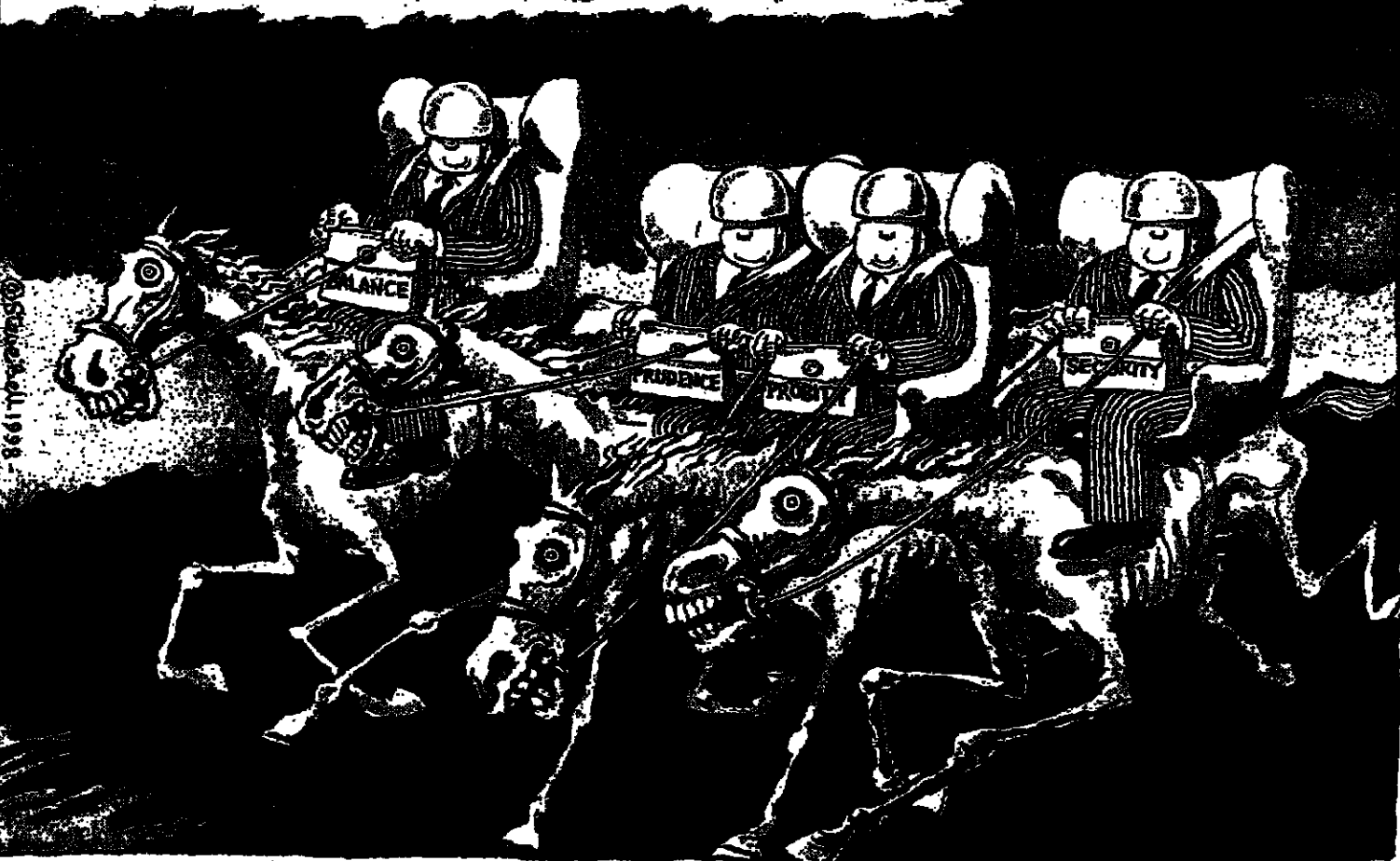
THE news that George Soros plans to sell \$5 billion of sterling is very convenient for the Chancellor, sending the pound tumbling and easing the threat of manufacturing recession. What luck, I say to Gordon's cheeky helper, Charlie Whelan. Charlie laughs. You haven't had George round to drinks lately, by any chance? "George Soros hasn't been to the Treasury," says Charlie. And Number 11? Charlie laughs again.

WHAT in God's name is going on next door, at Number 10? Following the vetoing of Paul Routledge's Express job, we fax the editor, Alastair Campbell each evening. When we rang Downing Street yesterday, we met insolence. "This is getting to be rather tedious," said someone. "I have no interest in your column." Click. Brr. These 11-year-old press officers are out of the loop, and Ali will roast this little chap when he finds out who it was. For now, we remain relentlessly on message.

OFF-MESSAGE, however, and alarmingly so is dear old Michael Winner. In a Sunday Times column about a London restaurant, Tescro, Michael treats us to an anecdote. "Peter Mandelson came back from the lavatory," he writes. "I was very confused," he said. "There were two sinks, one somewhat higher than the other. It seems Mr Mandelson was about to relieve himself in one of the sinks when he realised it was one in which you wash your hands." Billy. Michael denies receiving any reprint from Mandy. "I've said many times that I'm a great admirer of Peter Mandelson," he insists. Tatchell? "I mean, oh, what's his name? Tatchell's the other chap isn't he? You see, I'm such a great admirer, I can't remember his name." Helpless mirth ensues. "Mandelson! That's the one!" With that, he is gone.

MY eye is caught by the last lines of the obituary of Sam Cummings, a private arms dealer who has died aged 71. "He married, first, in 1952 (dissolved, 1955), Mika Graetz. He married, secondly, in 1960, Francis Blaetter. They had twin daughters, one of whom, Susan, was convicted of manslaughter in Virginia yesterday."

THE FOUR INTERNATIONAL BANKERS OF THE APOCALYPSE



Look back to learn how children can discover that school is cool

Decca Aitkenhead



AT THE risk of sounding like a teacher, I'd like to recommend a book to David Blunkett. It's called *That Dreadful School*, and is a headmaster's account of a school he founded.

It was an unusual place. Pupils could choose to come to lessons, or choose not to. Many chose not to, but soon got bored hanging around, and so they chose to go.

The author was AS Neill, and his school was inspired by a progressive education movement which believed in giving children freedom and in listening to them. He was writing in the early part of the century, when most schools believed pupils should be set in rows in silence and drilled with the three Rs. Often, children preferred not to go to school at all, and over the years the progressive schools received many of those truants. Many went on to become teachers.

Why did kids refuse to go to school? One study asked 100 truants this question, and these were some of the answers. "If they made learning more fun, you would learn things faster, because when you're having fun you remember things." Another said: "It's unbelievable. It just bores you. You just sit there and you feel like banging your head on the table." They said teachers only cared about "getting through the curriculum" for the day.

"If teachers had respect for the students, then there would be respect back," said one. Instead, they said teachers were only interested in getting them to shut up, pass exams, and wear the proper uniform. "It looks like I'm going to a funeral in it," commented one boy.

Sadly, this study doesn't date from the early part of the

century, but from the early part of this year. It suggests the uneasy sensation of a time warp, stuck back in the days before education ministers began listening to progressive ideas. Schools have now stopped listening, and, unremarkably perhaps, they now also have a galloping truancy problem. The Government is worried, and this week announced that irresponsible parents are largely to blame. Why parents should have changed so dramatically in recent years is unclear. What has clearly changed, however, is our concept of a good education.

Monday's report on truancy contained much that was good. Of course, shopkeepers should stop serving kids who are obviously skiving, and if truants can be taken back to school by police, they will at least see that the authorities don't only care about them after they've lifted their feet from Safeways. When it comes to truants, though, the report is less sound.

It informs us that loads of parents know full well their kids are bunking off, and wouldn't care less. But if this is so, issuing them with papers to alert them to truancy is an expensive waste of time. As pilots with papers have actually been successful, the demonisation of parents is hard to understand. Certainly, a few parents have always condoned truancy, and can be heavily fined. However, this is rarely done for the reason that it rarely makes any difference.

And if parents won't pay fines, do we imprison them? The Office talked on Monday of ultimately taking their children into care, but as truancy rates for children in care are scandalously high, that would be very stupid indeed.

One way of overcoming the non-payment problem is to penalise only parents on welfare; in parts of New York, if their kids skip school their benefits get docked. The idea has been seriously considered by our government, and we can only hope that the blind injustice of the scheme will be obvious even to New Labour.

Governments can throw all the technology and law they like at kids hanging about in shopping centres, but those kids are famously ingenious and can be relied upon to outwit any system. The Government is commendably determined to "nip truancy in the bud". The trouble is, the bud isn't in the shopping centre, but back in class.

CHILDREN truant for any number of reasons — bullying, peer pressure, family problems — but the consistent reason they give is that they find lessons boring, and they don't get on with teachers. This is an entirely reasonable response to school. I was bored out of my mind at school. By good fortune, I found exams fairly easy, but as that was how pupils had come to be valued in comprehensives in the late 1980s, life was tolerable. It wasn't humiliating, or alienating, or hostile. Just very boring.

Unfortunately, that tends to be the experience of most professionals and MPs who dictate education policy. School was all right. Few know what it's like to find the three Rs bloody hard, to get left behind or laughed at, to be the problem child the teacher gets annoyed with, or to have other talents nobody's interested in because they don't translate into a good GCSE grade. Presumably, that's why they've

spent the last 20 years turning schools back into exam factories where staff are too busy covering the curriculum and filling out forms to help the children who don't fit the standardised model. Perhaps the surprise is not that so many kids skip school these days, but that so many manage to go.

If you want to stop truancy, you have to make children want to go to school. That involves valuing teachers who get rosey exam results but engage with disaffected teenagers who would otherwise be off down the arcade. It involves employing pastoral staff, and letting teachers depart from the curriculum. It means allowing five-year-olds to learn at their own pace, and teaching prospective parents that smart uniforms and silent corridors aren't the only way to judge a school.

It was punitive measures which got reported this week, but, in fact, the report also recommended many of these measures, and this is hugely encouraging.

Hopefully, the £21 million pledged won't all go on papers, and the progressive ideas will get as much play in the classroom as the punitive ones did in the media. But if schools are to become places which value every child, the pressure on them to be exam factories will have to be eased.

Child-centred education, otherwise known as "trendy and 1980s", made some mistakes. The bigger mistake is to reject it wholesale, and create schools which children will only go to under police escort. If we have learned nothing from our history of education policy, it is politicians, not pupils, who haven't been paying attention to the lessons.

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A table you can't refuse

Bill Buford



ONE of New York's most enduring romances is between the mobster and the trendy restaurant. Movie stars, singers, sport celebrities go to trendy restaurants to be seen going to trendy restaurants. Why does a mobster go?

I spotted my first one last summer. He was in his mid-thirties, perfectly groomed, in a three-piece Armani suit (a tidy waistcoat, buttoned white shirt, no tie) accompanied by a lithe woman with a throaty laugh and a hearty appreciation for drink.

Every 30 minutes or so two scar-faced goons came in from the stretch limo outside (or else from Central Casting) with news of this or that. "Yes, boss," they said. "No, boss. Whatever you say, boss."

Score's, the gentlemen's club in midtown, is in the news — there was a mob killing on its doorstep last year — and it's packed with celebrities: Nick Nolte and Val Kilmer having a drink alongside John Cusack.

Third Avenue up from 60th Street, every other restaurant is said to be mob. There are mob restaurants on the lower East Side, throughout Little Italy, and on the West Side, in the meat-packing district. And then there is Rao's.

THE restaurant, a small, 10-table place in East Harlem, has built its reputation not on its cooking but on the fact that you can't get a table. There is one free, evidently, on November 11, but that's the last this year. The impossibility of getting inside has, in the nature of these things, engendered its own business.

There are now four different Rao's sauces on the market. I have a jar of the Marinara, and this is what the label says: "Rao's homemade from the famous New York City restaurant that's frequented by celebrities and stars who wait four to six months for a reservation. Go on: eat like the stars... Made from San Marzano tomatoes, the finest in the world, imported from Italy."

San Marzano tomatoes come in a tin and cost about \$1.35. They are perfectly fine tomatoes, for tinned tomatoes. This week by Sony, of songs from Rao's juke box. An evening at Rao's is not an evening without Frankie, the co-proprietor, turning up the juke box some time after the pasta and singing along with his favourite tunes. You're meant to sing too, while you stir the sauce. At least that's the instruction on the CD case. And now there is a Rao's Cook.

Rao's is a throw-back, a "joint". Not yet Disney, but tacky enough to be a theme park of some kind, even if the theme is an aesthetically benign one, like old New York, where people still carried cash and didn't have credit cards, and no one lived in the suburbs, and a guy was a guy and a dame was a dame.

It's Humphrey Bogart and Damon Runyon. And it doesn't exist any more. But it's an awfully happy place to visit.

to demonstrate continually, over a long period of step-by-step debt principal reduction, to direct all immediate and continuing debt service credit towards agreed health, education and infrastructure development programmes. Such an arrangement would benefit both the publicly financed creditors and the world's poor. Since 1986, Uganda, under President Museveni, is showing clearly what can be done. His country has been the beneficiary of the first World Bank/IMF debt reduction programme. More accountable and transparent governments will follow, and new foreign investment and genuine domestic capital accumulation could result. The world's poor would then have reason to be grateful.

Karl Ziegler is director of the Centre for Accountability and Debt Relief

Third world debt forgiveness only benefits well-fed dictators clambering into private jets

Count me out

Karl Ziegler

WHEN viewers might see starving people in Southern Sudan on their television screens, they will find any campaign to provide food and better healthcare and education to Africa's poorest citizens compelling. When church leaders and parish priests urge their flocks to set aside money each week until the year 2000, towards a campaign to help the world's poor, this likewise will evoke positive responses.

When 50 national and international charities and other non-governmental organisations combine with church leaders, media commentators, politicians and others, under the aegis of Jubilee 2000, to urge their followers to construct a human chain to press their genuine humanitar-

ian concerns on G8 national leaders gathering in Birmingham this Saturday, buses will be filled. Sadly, the main goal of the Jubilee 2000 campaign, to write off the debt of the world's poorest nations by the year 2000, will hardly be noticed by most of the world's poor, either now or into the new millennium.

Many are now effectively disenfranchised and will most likely continue to be ruled largely by kleptocrats, selfish ruling elites and unaccountable, inefficient governments. Such governments are hardly likely to convert the proceeds of debt relief into social programmes in which they don't get a piece of the action. Unless a new, more realistic policy is proposed and implemented, the poor will remain frustrated.

The principal co-ordinator of the Jubilee 2000 cam-

paign, the New Economics Foundation, from which a huge number of fund-raising materials have landed on people's doorsteps, maintain that African governments transfer four times more in debt payments than they spend on the health and education of their citizens.

THIS claim — the most potent in the campaign literature — does not stand up to critical analysis. As long as many African governments continue to misallocate their resources, their nations' economies will continue their descent into further economic and political chaos and social deprivation.

A significant amount of the borrowings incurred by many African nations have been redirected towards: ● ruling elites' capital flight, which usually leaves

the continent and never returns; ● "white elephant" or other inappropriate programmes (the only act in town for the world's poorest nations); Jubilee 2000 should now redirect its large popular support towards programmes

which genuinely help the world's poor directly and bypass the kleptocrats. In addition, this powerful coalition should insist that the only governments to benefit are those which contract — on an audited and fully transparent basis — to demonstrate continually, over a long period of step-by-step debt principal reduction, to direct all immediate and continuing debt service credit towards agreed health, education and infrastructure development programmes. Such an arrangement would benefit both the publicly financed creditors and the world's poor. Since 1986, Uganda, under President Museveni, is showing clearly what can be done. His country has been the beneficiary of the first World Bank/IMF debt reduction programme. More accountable and transparent governments will follow, and new foreign investment and genuine domestic capital accumulation could result. The world's poor would then have reason to be grateful.



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Gangrene of debt

Time for a radical solution

THERE IS no greater sore on the conscience of the world than its procrastination in the face of the crippling debt problems of the Third World and sub-Saharan Africa in particular. Even after reading the harrowing experiences and statistics we have published this week as part of our series *The New Slavery*, it is still difficult to really comprehend the mindless depredation that lies behind them. That is why the Guardian is backing debt forgiveness as a vital campaign for the millennium. How can we really know what it is like to be an impoverished peasant working for most of the year to clear off part of the interest payments on international debts you will never be able to pay back and which were often incurred by former regimes siphoning off much of the fruits for themselves? We can read the bald statistics — developing countries' debts to the West have soared from \$600 billion (\$370 billion) in 1980 to \$2.2 trillion today — without being fully able to grasp the human tragedy behind them.

We have reported many instances of failed economies — but the "success" stories are mortifying as well. Like Guyana, which 10 years into an IMF programme, has earned plaudits from that organisation for paying back \$1.7 billion to its creditors, yet without managing to repay any of the capital, leaving 45 per cent of the population below the poverty line. If this is success, spare us the failures.

The reasons poor countries developed this financial gangrene are still debated

and are not necessarily relevant to a solution. In the 1970s they were encouraged by the West to borrow recycled oil money at variable rates of interest which were subsequently to rocket skywards. They soon became sucked into a vicious spiral — forced to pay ever-increasing interest payments out of collapsing commodity prices, an explosive situation aggravated by civil strife, corrupt or inexperienced governments and the consequences of famine. To add insult to injury, hardly any Western countries came remotely near their UN commitment to channel 0.7 per cent of GDP to developing nations as aid. The statistics of Africa almost beggar belief. While the West improved its living standards year in and year out, most countries in sub-Saharan Africa are worse off in real terms than when they got independence 30 years ago. For years, despite impoverishment, they were forced to pay more in interest to the West than they received in trade and other flows — a cure equivalent to treating haemophiliacs by demanding more blood.

In recent years there have been tentative signs of improvement. Africa's economy grew by 5.2 per cent in 1996 and the deterioration to 3.7 per cent last year was partly due to the exceptional drought in North Africa. Even so there is no chance at all of Africa being able to repay its debts. It is now vital that the yoke is lifted. This week's Group of Eight meeting in Birmingham — at which supporters of Jubilee 2000 (backed by the Guardian) plan to hold hands in a human chain around the building where the meeting is taking place — must agree an immediate solution. To be fair, the West has been trying to get its act together, but at an agonisingly slow pace and without universal commitment. The 1996 Highly Indebted Poor Countries initiative at least provides a framework. But its

target of reducing debt repayments to 25 per cent of export earnings is far too modest (why not 10 to 15 per cent?) and the timescale of up to six years to satisfy the IMF is ludicrously onerous. (Compare that with the way the Maastricht criteria were fudged for candidate members of EMU). There are other interesting initiatives like the way Britain's Export Credits Guarantee Department organises sales of developing countries' debt in order to liberate funds for productive investment in the debtor country. But none of them will have an impact on the scale required.

What is needed, as Jubilee 2000 advocates, is a Big Bang of debt repayment comparable to the historic ones of recent history (like post-war Germany and America's forgiveness of British debt in the 1930s). Sure, there are big problems. Like where do you draw the line? What do you do about "good" countries which have worked their way out of trouble? And what do you do about undemocratic, despotic countries like Nigeria which have indigenous wealth of their own (oil) and who have squandered past wealth and might do the same again? The answer is that the under-servicing poor of Nigeria have as much right to be free of debt repayment as any other country but in future distributions must be targeted on life's essentials — water, health and education — and monitored so they aren't hijacked by corrupt politicians and administrators. It may be impractical to link debt write-offs to moves towards more democracy — but at least improved education ought to hasten the process.

Debt forgiveness should also be accompanied by increased international co-ordination to track down the astonishing sums of money that have been siphoned off from past aid by corrupt politicians, businessmen and administrators. Morgan Guaranty

Trust estimates that no less than \$198 billion disappeared from 18 developing countries during the 1980s of which \$31 billion was deposited in secret American bank accounts (and much of the rest, doubtless in Swiss accounts).

Debt relief has humanitarian motives (though these should not be exaggerated since a lot of the debt has no possibility of being repaid). But it is also self-interested from the West's point of view. Debt relief would give a much needed stimulus to the stuttering recovery apparent even in the sub-Saharan region. Increased economic growth would be good for intra-African trade and also for the West which would have enlarged export opportunities. The G8 nations have talked about debt reduction for years without producing a solution that matches the scale of the problem. Now is their chance to escape from their talking shop image. And there is no more suitable place to start than Birmingham, which had a leading role in Britain's industrial revolution two centuries ago. Let it now be the place where Africa gets a helping hand.

Cash for gongs

Pym lets the cat out of the bag

FRANCIS PYM is a good and decent man. One of the last of the Tories' Toff Tendency, the former Cabinet minister has long been admired as a quiet, fair-minded politician. Liberals liked him in the 1980s because he was so obviously a wet — and because he earned the Lady's disfavour by suggesting, during the 1983 election campaign, that landslide victories could be unhealthy and that voters should perhaps prevent the Conservatives winning one. Nevertheless, even the most sympathetically-inclined

would find it hard to defend Lord Pym's latest contribution to the nation's political life.

In his capacity as chairman of the Political Honours Scrutiny Committee, his lordship, now aged 76, confessed that generous donors to political parties stand an improved chance of receiving a gong. Testifying before Sir Patrick Nell's committee on standards in public life, Lord Pym said a past financial gift would be looked on as a "bonus rather than a minus" when assessing the merits of a potential honoree. After all, he explained, political benefactors had proved they were prepared to "put their money where their mouth is".

That remark confirms the most cynical view of Britain's entire honours system. Here is the word of the man who supervises political decorations apparently admitting that there is, after all, a trade in cash-for-gongs. For all Downing Street's hasty requests that Lord Pym's comments be put in context, they provide, as the Liberal Democrats rightly argued yesterday, "an extraordinary insight" into the honours process — and the shabbiness which marks much of it.

For that Lord Pym should be thanked. He has reopened two necessary debates. First, he has reminded us that the whole honours business is in need of an overhaul. John Major promised a more classless system, Tony Blair has talked of a People's Honours — but we are a long way from both. Second, his lordship has given fresh weight to those who want a clean-up of political funding. Full disclosure of all gifts above £5,000 — or even £2,500, as suggested by the Labour peer David Putnam yesterday — now looks essential. It may not end the trade in cash-for-honours — but it would at least drag it into the open, where everyone could see it for what it is.

Letters to the Editor

Finance, footie and self-abuse

HOW can George Soros buy a pound for DM2.10, sell it at DM2.70 and make a profit? (Letters, May 14). He can't — he buys the option to sell at DM2.90 (say). Provided the value of the pound falls below DM2.90, he will make a profit. If it stays above DM2.90, he only loses the price of his bet. Judging by past events, the very fact that Mr Soros thinks the pound will fall in value will make people sell sterling, thus creating a self-fulfilling prophecy. Peter Henery, London.

ACTUALLY thought I saw Alan Shearer kick his opponent in the face. But then I thought I saw the LA police beating the hell out of Rodney King. In both cases the authorities found otherwise. Now I know that most people want Shearer not to be suspended from playing for England in the World Cup. But like the lad who proclaimed that the king wasn't wearing any clothes, I must protest. A A Kurtz, London.

PETER Silverton (May 13) traces the passage of the melody of a triumphant 1970s gay anthem — Go West — to its improbable 1990s destination on the football terraces — as One Nil to the Arsenal. But he makes no mention of its appearance in modern Catholic hymn books, where it appears as Give Thanks with a Grateful Heart. Give Thanks to the Holy One. Rev Michael Hampson, Harlow, Essex.

SO the new wonder drug for impotence (Erection pill) threat to eyes, (May 14) could damage the eyesight of men who get carried away with it. Haven't our mothers been warning us of this for years? Maurice Hickey, Plymouth.

The GLC we remember

DO not remember Ros Coward (Come clean, quickly, Ken, May 12), but I experienced the GLC for 15 years, concluding as a chief officer. I recall thousands of hard-working and skilled employees who ensured the vast GLC budget was spent to practical effect on waste disposal, traffic lights and the Thames barrier. The idea that "most went up in fireworks" is offensive.

Yes, there was ideological correctness in the Livingstone GLC. For example, it forced the London Fire Brigade to take seriously the admission of black and women fire fighters (and not call them firemen). We now take such equal opportunities policies for granted. But it also increased the budget to keep fire stations open.

The GLC had completed a survey which showed that black and women were disproportionately housed on the worst estates. The measures introduced to deal with that are now universal in housing departments under all shades of political control.

Let me take one example as a contribution to one of the derided festivals ("GLC whimmin's year") we surveyed the concerns of women on council estates and discovered a substantial fear of crime not shown up in surveys of men.

We developed a programme to make council flats more secure against burglary, so relieving the insecurity of women, which was more prevalent than burglary. It was that concern about "community safety" that Tony Blair identified 10 years later as one of his personal crusades.

I managed that budget: it was £150 million annually, spent on major renovation works carried out by private contractors. I do not recall buying a single firework. Bernard Crofton, London.

TOO remember the GLC first hand. Running a gay youth group at the time, I remember £1m being made available to gay organisations. However, such grants were raised by raiding the contingency fund and left the council dangerously demoralised of emergency funds. Fares Fair worked in large part because there was spare capacity on London Underground. Not so nowadays: the extra volume of passengers would push the system beyond the point of collapse. Ken Livingstone was underbought and neglected the greater picture in favour of special interests.

As a Labour supporter I would like the opportunity to vote against him. Patrick Tynte-Hickey, London.

IN THE mayor of London, the Government intends to erase the greatest directly elected mayor in British history. But he or she will not build or rent any houses, provide any schools or colleges, create any new jobs, or provide any kind of welfare or social service or any special help for children, the elderly or disabled people. The mayor will not be able to save a historic London hospital, nor take over a single park. Richard Heller, London.

LONDONERS want a proper strategic authority with real power, able to effect real change in the capital. Instead we will get a public relations mayor, some old fart in cap and bells sucking up to businessmen and Tony Blair. The fact that Jeffrey Archer and Richard Branson are being touted as candidates only serves to underline the grimness of the choice. Russell Davies, London.



That's enough whingeing

MARTYN DAY's blimpish tirade against the Japanese (Garter Shame, May 14) is another example of our national inability to let go of the past. The Japanese waged a particularly ugly war and paid a spectacular price for it — their wooden cities (and inhabitants) burned to ashes or nuked, their armies annihilated, their country occupied and forcibly converted into a US island of a virtuous polity. The leaders responsible put on show-trial and executed or given long prison sentences.

So what now? Why not close all the Japanese-owned factories in Britain, refuse to buy

any Japanese products? I'm sorry about what happened to Mr Thatcher and his comrades. It was a savage experience, but hardly unique in history. The men who did it are dead, or punished, or unfairly escaped into the black holes that open up after any war. It's life, and it stinks, but it's time to let go. Jim McDermott, South Cerney, Glos.

We do not publish letters where only an e-mail address is supplied; please include a full postal address. We may edit letters. The Country Diary is on page 14.

What is the primary purpose of rules on asylum-seekers?

YOUR Leader on asylum-seekers (May 12) welcomed the Government's decision to abolish the primary purpose rule. As Jack Straw stated: "This pernicious rule has penalised genuine marriages."

Yet people who have lived in the UK for many years and entered a genuine marriage with a British national and had children born here are having their cases refused if they apply after a decision to refuse permission to stay on another basis. The Government offers such applicants the choice of either separation from their spouse (they may apply to re-enter the UK, although for deportees they are prevented from doing so for three years) or travel at public expense for the British spouse to join their partner abroad.

Clearly when the Government abolished the rule they only had certain categories of genuine marriage in mind. Pierre Malchouff, Hackney Community Law Centre, London.

IN common with all reputable organisations working in the immigration field, we are of the opinion that the majority of the people who seek asylum in the UK have grounds for fearing persecution in their countries of origin.

But the immigration authorities are determined to pick over every dot and comma of claims of persecution for evidence of even minor inconsistencies — despite the fact that the UNHCR insists that refugee status under the Geneva Convention should be based on a sensible assessment of overall credibility rather than an absolute proof of persecution.

We are convinced a return to the spirit of the Convention would substantially cut the backlog of unresolved cases. This would require a radical break with a philosophy which presumes all asylum-seekers are liars and cheats. Don Flynn, Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants, London.

This is the score on club cricket

YOUR article (Fear of cricket apartheid, May 8) gave a misleading impression of club cricket in the London area. In the four metropolitan counties, Essex, Kent, Middlesex and Surrey, there are more than 1,200 cricket clubs, more than half of which play in well-established leagues. A good number of these clubs include large numbers of black and Asian cricketers and some may genuinely be called community clubs, eg Indian Gym-

khana and Lambeth Enterprises. These clubs do not struggle to get fixtures because the fixtures are pre-determined at the start of the season and in most cases also involve promotion and relegation, so that ambitious clubs can progress up the ladder.

The premier leagues in all four counties include not only the best club players, but also contracted professionals on county staffs, minor counties players and overseas players

with first-class experience. Last weekend, opening the bowling for three separate clubs in the first division of the Surrey Championship were Wayne Kidwell (Transvaal and South Africa A), Sean Kline (Guyana and West Indies A) and Alex Tudor (Surrey and England U19). In fact, the best black and Asian cricketers will be playing in mainstream club cricket and in some clubs will claim the majority of places in the 1st XI. Mike Edwards, Surrey Cricket Board, London.

Identity crisis

YOUR article about Belgium's malaise (Smeeny of the people, May 14) reminded me of my own frustration when trying to gather information about Brussels some five years ago. It has only two million inhabitants yet you have to contact all 18 communes if you want to compile statistical data about the city. I was told that one of the few positive aspects of German occupation was a rationalisation of this system but, in the

wholesale de-Nazification which took place after the war, Brussels reverted to the old way. This state of affairs seemed to typify a wider tendency: an overriding insecurity about national identity which often translates into racism (particularly Walloon-Flemish) and undermines most organisational endeavours. The presence of the EU and Nato headquarters in Brussels does not seem to have made Belgians more cosmopolitan; quite the opposite. A Mostyn Owen, London.

Protest notes

Bel Littlejohn

DAYS long gone... but, mmmmm, the memory lives on. I remember sitting on a purple bean-bag with Jack Straw in the late Sixties, me on folk-guitar, Jack on maracas. Robin Cook on organ. Harriet Harman (as she then was) on kazoos, the four of us singing great old Woody Guthrie protest songs until way into the early evening.

"This land is your land, this land is my land, this land is made for you and me". Those were the days of hope, days when we really believed we could change things by song; but it was to be nearly 30 years before May 1, 1997, the day those early dreams were to become a growing reality. "The answer my friend," I remember singing to myself at the end of that momentous week in British politics, "is one of many options soon to be considered in a provisional draft 'discussion document'". As a lyric, it needed a certain amount of work done on it — but it truly encapsulated the burning hopes of a generation.

Yesterday's paper brought us the truly wicked news that Billy Bragg has written the melodies for 15 previously undiscovered Woody Guthrie songs — tidings of great joy to those of us who were involved in the whole protest song right from the very start. Do

you remember Paris '68, the joy, the liberation, the burning sense of revolution in the air? For those of us in the thick of it — I was just a few hundred miles away at the time, in Eastbourne, working for one of the most radical doctors of this generation — it was like a dream come true. And it was the protest songs of that year that kept our radical flames burning. Who could ever forget Dylan's searingly angry rendering of Hey, Mr Tambourine Man, in which the singer bumps into a man in the street with a tambourine and demands that he "play a song for me", adding, "in that something-something morning I'll come da-da-di-da". Believe me, it's etched on all our minds.

And protest songs remain a very potent influence in our land. They can carry a political message simply and clearly right into the hearts and minds of millions of listeners. It is by now widely ac-

knowledge that it was the sheer force and passion of Billy Bragg's protest songs during the miners' strike of 1984 that brought the Tories crashing to such a humiliating defeat in the general election of 1997. For this reason, the much-maligned Peter Mandelson — who, incidentally, loves to hum radical old Barbra Streisand numbers to himself while he's peddling his new exorcism — has been commissioning a series of brand new protest songs for and on behalf of the Government in time for the new millennium.

ALREADY, some of them have come in. Frankly, they are so truly passionate and cutting-edge that I just couldn't resist sharing them with you today. Last night, 30 years on, the old gang — Robin and Harriet and Jack and myself — sat around, jackets unbuttoned, in Rob-

in's Foreign Office snugg, belting them out at the top of our voices. "Hey! This is a great one!" enthused Jack, dressed in his best casual wear, with tie-dye cravat, earth-shoes and a pair of his favourite loams. "It's a reworking of a Peter, Paul and Mary favourite with an incredibly up-to-the-minute new message specifically designed to accuse the young." He got out his maracas and sang, sang, sang: Puff the Magic Dragon. Lined by the sea. Until picked up by armed officers. Working undercover for the CID.

Great song, great rendition — and with a tremendously powerful message for the kids of today, bless 'em. Then it was Robin's turn to blow our minds with this foreboding reworking of the classic Woody Guthrie number, written in full collaboration with the lovely Madeleine Albright (ex Mamma and Pappa):

This land is your land! This land is my land! This land was made for me, not you.

After a short tribute song to the pioneering Derry Irvine (We Shall Overcome), Harriet knocked us all backwards with a scorching, heartfelt version of Dylan's You Gotta Serve Somebody, which we dedicated to Tony. Finally, I told the gang that when Peter asked me to compose an anthem for the opening of the Millennium Dome, it had been the proudest moment of my life. He was after something as powerful as Derry's election anthem, but with a cutting-edge, futuristic, millennium twist to it, reflecting the responsibilities of three years in government. My solution?

Things can only get better! Can only get better! Or a little bit worse! You'll be hearing this chant a lot in the next three years. Enjoy!

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Alan Cormack

Pioneer with X-ray vision

PROFESSOR Alan Cormack, who has died aged 74, was the physicist who developed the mathematical theory underpinning the use of X-rays to produce three-dimensional cross-section images — CAT scans or computerised axial tomography.

He had been professor of physics at Tufts University since 1964 and in 1979 won the Nobel prize for physiology or medicine jointly with the British electronics engineer Sir Godfrey Hounsfield who, independently, devised his own mathematical method and went on to construct and demonstrate the RMI CAT scanner — the first computerised tomography machine to produce clinically useful images.

Cormack's pioneering work, of which Hounsfield was unaware, began 15 years earlier when as the only nuclear physicist available to meet the requirements of new hospital legislation, he was asked to look into the calculation of the radiation doses used in cancer therapy at Groote Schuur Hospital in Cape Town. At this time he knew nothing of medical diagnostics or X-ray techniques. He soon found that existing

methods of evaluating absorbed dose, based on the time values of two-dimensional single-shot X-ray images, were very imprecise. Greater precision would require three-dimensional determination of local tissue density throughout the body. There was no existing technique to achieve this but he recognised the problem as essentially mathematical and saw that it could probably be solved by integrating the information contained in several different views of the same part of the body. Deriving an integrated cross-sectional image based on a number of lateral X-ray shots from different directions is far more complex than, for example, deriving a single location from routine triangulation.

To test the mathematics of his approach, Cormack made irregularly-shaped test models containing components of differing density and found that he could indeed reconstruct accurate cross-sections from integrated information. But Cormack had only a simple desk-top calculator to help with the work and when, in 1963 and 1964, he published his results in two classic papers pointing out that the method could be applied to X-ray or positron emission



He met and fell in love with the American student who was to become his wife during a lecture on quantum mechanics

reconstruction, there was very little response.

Cormack never attempted to build the type of scanner toward which his idea seemed to point and nor was it realised then that images generated by his method would reveal the most elegant and precise differentiation of soft tissues, giving it an enormous diagnostic advantage over existing X-ray techniques. Cormack did not pursue his idea. Instead he became established in American academic life and returned to fundamental studies of high-energy particle physics and its role in cosmology, the research field that had fascinated him during his early years at uni-

versity in South Africa and to which he successfully devoted part of his life at Tufts. However, in 1970-72, when Hounsfield's ENU scanner took the medical world by storm, Cormack returned to his time to reveal soft tissue structure, points of haemorrhage or small tumours in the brain. Cormack returned to the mathematics of scanner imaging, devoting much of his time to solving remaining mathematical difficulties, to improving X-ray methods and applying his idea to positron emission tomography. He was active as a consultant in this field until his death.

Cormack's parents, a teacher and an engineer,

came from the north of Scotland and went to South Africa as civil servants shortly before the first world war. After his father's death in 1936 the family settled in Cape Town. Under the clear night skies of the southern hemisphere, he became fascinated by astronomy and by the books of Edington and James Jeans, which left him aware of the need to study mathematics.

YET he was also aware that the prospects of making a living as an astronomer in South Africa were poor. So, when he went up to Cape Town University, he followed his father by opting for electrical engineering. After two years he switched to physics and mathematics, completing both his BSc and Master's degrees in a style which, in 1946, resulted in a research studentship at St John's, Cambridge, to work under the great Professor Otto Frisch at the Cavendish Laboratory, using the cyclotron to study the properties of helium-6.

Cormack never completed this research. A few months after arriving at Cambridge and during — of all circumstances — Dirac's lectures on quantum mechanics, he met

and fell in love with an American student, Barbara Seavey. Needing money to marry, he cabled Cape Town in a search for work and was offered a post as physics lecturer.

In 1956 his first sabbatical was spent in the physics department at Harvard working with Robert Watson in the group of brilliant scientists then leading the world in cyclotron research. He was clearly at home and, while he was at Harvard, the chairman of the physics department at Tufts University invited him to join the Tufts team.

At Tufts he completed his pioneering mathematical work on CAT scanning between teaching duties and other research. In a meteoric career, he was appointed professor of physics in 1964, elected chairman of physics from 1969-76, and became university professor when he was "retired" in 1980. He won a host of awards from around the world including the coveted US National Medal of Science in 1990.

Cormack is survived by his wife and three children.

Anthony Tucker

Alan Macleod Cormack, physicist, born February 23, 1924; died May 7, 1998



Shirazi... passionately aware of the position of women

Manny Shirazi

A sister under the skin

MANNY Shirazi, who has died aged 51, was a novelist, photographer, film critic and political activist whose twin passions of feminism and the third world crystallised into a unique body of work.

Her first novel, *Janady Alley*, published by the Women's Press in 1984, was the story of a working-class girl's childhood in 1950s Tehran. In 1991 came the more confidently political *Siege of Azadi Square*. She was working on a book about Iranian cinema and her third novel, *Cousin Saff*, is to be published later this year.

Shirazi, who wrote her first feminist short story at the age of 12, was always passionately aware of the position of women and profoundly influenced by her father's anti-imperialism.

She was a teacher for five years before a life-threatening heart problem spurred her family to raise the money to send her to England for a successful operation. Alone in England, homeless and penniless, her fighting character, flamboyance and capacity for making friends drew her into the early 1970s London squatting movement. She learned English and attended every class she could on English literature and politics.

Her son was born in 1973. She named him Niaz — Need in Farsi — because, she told

her brother, she needed him so much. He became the great love and inspiration of her life and they were always together. Shirazi remained in squats, working at the most menial of jobs to support them both until she moved into a council flat four years later.

In the introduction to her first novel, she wrote, "One of the ideas which helped me to write this book was the similarity between the shabby council estate — the isolation of women, violence against women, racism, filth and dehumanisation of the slum conditions of Iran or any third world country".

It was during her years in a south London council estate that she joined the collective that produced the feminist magazine *Spare Rib*. She wrote her first novel, became a photographer and developed *Spare Rib*'s film and fiction pages. As a photographer, she held several exhibitions between 1979 and 1986. She wrote extensively in English and Farsi (Persian). Her prose and poetry were published in British and Iranian magazines. Her son is editing a book of her poetry.

Eileen McElvilly

Manny Shirazi (Sebah Mansoreh Samadizadeh), writer and photographer, born July 24, 1946; died May 7, 1998

William Newland

Gold from clay

WILLIAM Newland, who has died aged 79, was a skilful and wise artist and individualist. At the midpoint of his artistic career he led a small but influential group of ceramicists who challenged the eminence of Japanese-inspired potters such as Bernard Leach, by reintroducing to the 1950s the English ceramic tradition. He was, however, born in New Zealand and it is not only his work which will be treasured, but also an eccentric and passionate cross-cultural vitality which fuelled his attitude to life and art.

He arrived in London in the 1940s, via the North African desert and a German prison camp, where his time as a POW gave him a special kind of grit and determination which never faded, a delicious sense of the absurd, great depths of friendship, and a rather secretive way of rolling and smoking very tiny cigarettes.

Newland became a tutor at London University's Institute of Education in one of the few postgraduate art departments of the time. He remained there throughout his career, impressing upon students his unwavering concern for the prime educative value of tactile and three-dimensional study and demonstrating a total involvement with the expressiveness of clay. A basement pottery, hidden behind the locker rooms, soon became a mecca for trainee art teachers and for others attracted by the hum of activity within as well as by Newland's reputation as a stimulating teacher.

Some students, who previously specialised in another art medium, were influenced by his enthusiasm to change to ceramics. One painter, David Reeves, eventually became head of ceramics at London's Central School of Art. Another, Margaret Hine, married Newland in the 1950s and subsequently taught ceramics in further education and became a renowned artist-potter herself.

But his influence during his 45 years of teaching was broad as well as deep, apparent in many places where his students had worked as teachers. Quirky themes of his own work, especially the witty but sensual human caricatures in three dimensions or on glazed dishes, could be



Glazed look... as a ceramicist, Newland (below) re-invented the past selectively and with gleeful energy

discovered extensively but imaginatively reinterpreted on the shelves of school potteries. There was always a gutsy dynamism about his teaching style, linked to the robust nature of his own work, which transferred to his students and their work. For many years he had filled university corridors with prints and paintings, mounted exhibitions in its galleries and coaxed successful directors into giving art a high profile.

As a ceramicist, Newland re-invented the past selectively and with gleeful energy: moulded Staffordshire slipware, hand-built terracotta, "Indian" sculptures, "Italian" majolica and some stone ware from the Far East as well as more modernist influences were all within his distinctively personal repertoire. The "Pissacottes", as Leach mockingly called Newland and his 1950s associates (Margaret and Nicholas Vergette), certainly owed something of the directness of their simple but strong decorations to Picasso.

In the forms themselves



and their surface treatments, the mainstream of his work extended a fundamentally very English rural tradition, more intuitively haptic and less openly intellectual than that inspired in Leach by the Japanese. Denis May recalls that in his decorative dishes and clay figures, Newland delighted in sexuality with a wry sense of comedy. "Europe's expressive body as she rides the bull (on a dish) suggests

gests that when he arrives at his destination he will discover to his cost that it is he who has been taken for a ride."

Around London there are several of Newland's architectural ceramics, some made with Margaret, others with his son, Jeremy. At the top end of Baker Street stand his wondrous, near life-size, terracotta figures made in the 1970s for a restaurant doorway.

Newland never lost his New Zealand accent, often exaggerating it for fun but he also embraced the role of an English country gentleman, creating with Marg an archetypal English cottage home, surrounded by flowers, smelling of bees and fresh bread and, of course, replete with paintings, ceramics and records. This was not mere style, but a living part of his philosophy: richly dined in daylight and orchestrated by his expressive potter's hands, visitors were adjured to consider the nature of drawing, the meaning of art and the follies of those who neglected it.

After Marg's death in 1986, the rural idyll was never the same, but the clay was still kneaded and the kilns fired. The British ceramic scene had moved towards greater abstraction, but Newland's sensual work is powerful enough to hold its place in the century's ceramics; a series of exhibitions culminated in a major retrospective shown in Brighton, Birmingham and Aberystwyth in 1996 and a smaller show of recent work shown at the Oxford Gallery in 1997.

Newland's message that clay is a primeval material bursting with energy, waiting for human hands and the creative imagination to release it, was carried into many corners of our educational system. He was saddened to see ceramics become, for a time, a casualty of the National Curriculum, but his work and influence remain to carry the message in a potent form. "Wait on", Will would say.

He is survived by his son and a daughter, Sally, an artist.

Sheila Payne

Michael Hawker adds: Many will remember Willie Newland as an inspiring teacher. He was firmly convinced that the encouragement of children, through drawing, to tell a story as a sequence of related events, enabled the development of more general cognitive skills. To the end of his life he dreamed of setting up potteries in schools based on simple brick kilns and using locally dug clay. By involving children in the act of potting from beginning to end, their participation would itself become a story and part of the learning experience.

Newland was a great story teller and his company was as refreshing as his work and teaching. His intolerance of hypocrisy in people, politics and art was always expressed through a dry humour, usually while rolling a cigarette and scattering tobacco on the floor around his favourite seat which he would adopt if he visited regularly.

William Newland, potter and teacher, born February 5, 1919; died April 30, 1998

CORRECTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

ON PAGE 3, May 13, we carried a report headed "Only portrait of Joan of Arc found, with the sub-heading, Fresco may end guesswork over the face of France's patron saint. Joan of Arc is not the patron saint of France. According to the Encyclopaedia Britannica, this position is held by Saint Denis.

A REPORT on page 7 yesterday, headed Press warned to watch language in covering World Cup, misquoted the word Boche, the pejorative

term for a German. (French slang, originally meaning rascal, Concise Oxford Dictionary).

It is the policy of the Guardian to correct errors as soon as possible. Readers may contact the office of the Readers' Editor, Ian Mayes, by telephoning 0171 239 5589 between 11am and 5pm, Monday to Friday. Mail to Readers' Editor, The Guardian, 119, Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER. Fax: 0171 239 5897. E-mail: reader@guardian.co.uk

Birthdays

Madeline Albright, US Secretary of State, 61; Richard Avedon, photographer, 75; Brian Eno, rock musician, 57; Sir David Gore-Booth, high commissioner to India, 55; Richard Hough, author, 76; John Lanchberry, ballet composer, 75; Ellis Larkins, jazz pianist, 75; Barbara Lott, actress, 78; Mary Lyon, geneticist, 73; Mike Oldfield, musician, composer, 44; Anthony Shaffer, Peter Shaffer, playwrights, both 72; Prof Stephen Sparks, geologist, 49; Ralph Steadman, cartoonist, 61; Greg Wise, actor, 32.

Death Notices

DAVID, son of late Frederick, formerly of Chesham, London, passed away on 12th May, 1998, aged 78 years. Will be very missed by all his family and friends. Funeral service will take place in the South Chesham Baptist Church on Friday 22nd May, 1998 at 12 noon. Flowers or may be sent c/o Mrs H. Longmore, 55, 54B St. John's, Reading, RG1 1TS.

SAUNDERS, Frank, on 10th May, 1998, at his home, 20A, 1005 - 155, 1005, 50 years old, and remembered with great affection by his family.

In Memoriam

STEWART, Eileen, 20.12.1908 - 15.5.1998. 90 years old, and remembered with great affection by her family.

Births

BYRON SHAW/THOMAS, to Melanie Shaw and Matthew Byron Shaw, a daughter, Lola, a star for Jack, on 3rd April 1998. B170 713 4247 or 0171 713 4129 between 9am and 3pm Mon-Fri.

Delay in shipping new windows gives respite from lawsuit

Micro

M

Irish bank

B

Underside

A

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E

صلى الله عليه وسلم

Delay in shipping new Windows program gives Gates respite from lawsuit

High profile... Bill Gates is stuck at the starting gate for Windows 98 while his lawyers talk to the US Justice Department

PHOTOGRAPH BY AP



Microsoft wins truce

Mark Tran in New York

MICROSOFT offered a 11th hour concession yesterday in a successful attempt to stop the US Justice Department launching the most important anti-trust legal battle in 14 years. The Justice Department was set to start legal action yesterday against Microsoft for allegedly abusing its dominant market position, when the company agreed to delay shipments of Windows 98, the update to its popular Windows 95 computer operating system, by three days until next Monday.

One source close to the talks said Microsoft's top lawyers offered other "major concessions" to ease concerns that the software company illegally stifled competition.

In a statement that ended hours of suspense, the depart-

ment said that it and 20 state attorneys-general, who planned to file a separate case, had agreed to a delay while "discussions continue over the next several days". The case is considered the most important since the federal government broke up the AT&T telephone monopoly in 1984. Microsoft stands accused of engaging in a pattern of predatory conduct to protect its monopoly position in operating systems and attempting to extend that dominance to Internet browser software. Prosecutors believe the most damaging step Microsoft took — and the one that first drew the attention of federal investigators — was forcing its most important distributors, the PC makers who pre-install Windows on new computers, to take Microsoft's Internet Explorer browser as well.

The move, the federal government is planning to argue, was designed to crush Nets-

cape, the pioneering Web browser company. Prosecutors are ready to show that Microsoft went to great — and allegedly illegal — lengths and considerable expense to promote Internet Explorer, showering money on Internet service providers and sites that offered "content" and entertainment with free software and computer systems. Microsoft chairman Bill Gates has defended his company, saying that prices in information technology have fallen consistently and that new companies are emerging constantly with new products and innovations to compete with Microsoft.

Microsoft shares rose on news of the delay, up more than \$3 to \$30 in afternoon trading.

Microsoft said that the brief delay in shipping Windows 98 to computer makers will have no impact on its plan to sell the software to consumers from June 25.

"Talks have been going on

for a week with Justice and are continuing," said a Microsoft official. A week ago, Mr Gates met Justice Department officials in Washington for the first time, but that session amounted to little more than a restatement of Microsoft's public positions. Yesterday's decision by the Justice Department was the latest positive development for Microsoft after months of criticism. On Tuesday, an appeals court in Washington ruled that a lower court's order requiring Microsoft to offer its Internet Explorer browser separately from Windows 98 did not apply to Windows 98.

The judges also said that the 1994 consent decree, or anti-trust agreement, should not be interpreted as a block on distribution of Windows 98.

To do so would "put judges and juries in the unenviable position of designing compari-

How we got here today

1991: The Federal Trade Commission investigates claims that Microsoft is monopolising the market for PC operating systems. But the FTC fails to agree on whether to file a formal complaint and drops the matter.

1993: US Justice Department and European Commission begin separate investigations.

1994: Microsoft signs a consent decree (anti-trust deal) in which it agrees to amend its contracts with PC manufacturers and eliminate restrictions on other software producers. Europeans call off their investigation.

1995: Microsoft launches Windows 95 in August, cementing its grip on PC operating systems. In November, Microsoft launches the free Internet Explorer 2.0 in response

to competition from Netscape Navigator.

1997: US Justice Department sues Microsoft for violation of the 1994 decree by forcing manufacturers to incorporate Internet Explorer with Windows installations. In December, US district judge Thomas Jackson issues a preliminary injunction against Microsoft's requirement that PC makers selling Windows 95 "or any other successor" should install the Internet Explorer.

1998: Microsoft steps up its PR campaign to head off an anti-trust case. Bill Gates makes his debut on Capitol Hill in March, singing the praises of the hi-tech sector for its contribution to economic growth. He warns of the dire implications for the industry should Windows 98 be delayed by government action. This week Microsoft scores a legal win when an appeals court rules that the December injunction should not apply to Windows 98.

Oil company inflames Burma boycott row

Roger Cowie

PREMIER Oil became embroiled in the row over the Government's ethical foreign policy when protesters picketed its annual meeting yesterday, demanding withdrawal from Burma. The company provoked further anger by barring journalists from the meeting.

Premier is the only large British business still investing in Burma, whose military regime has been widely condemned for human rights abuses including torture and forced labour. Several western companies, including jeans company Levi, have pulled out, while British retailers such as Arcadia and Storehouse have stopped buying from Burmese manufacturers.

The Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, yesterday condemned Burma's rulers. He said the Government was encouraging British businesses "to recognise the reality of the Burmese regime". He insisted, however, that the Government was powerless to prevent investment by companies such as Premier, and that it would be pointless for Britain to apply sanctions unilaterally.

But campaigners said yesterday the Government does

have power to prevent foreign investment.

"What is the point in having an ethical foreign policy if it doesn't apply to business?" said Emma Must, a campaigner with the World Development Movement.

The WDM joined the Burma Action Group and the Methodist Association of Youth Clubs to lobby shareholders at yesterday's meeting. Protesters urged investors to press for Premier to pull out of its \$600 million exploration and pipeline project.

They relayed a message from Aung San Suu Kyi, the democratically elected leader who has been kept out of power by the military government. She said: "Investing in Burma is tantamount to encouraging the military regime."

At the meeting Premier answered questions on the Burmese issue from Yvette Mahon, director of the Burma Action Group, and Sheila Serhan, a private shareholder.

Chief executive Charles Jamieson told them Premier had no knowledge of any human rights abuses. He insisted Premier was politically neutral and had met Aung San Suu Kyi.

After the meeting, Mr Jamieson told journalists they had been excluded because it was a private meeting.

Guinness Peat trumps Mattel

Tony May

THE battle for Bluebird Toys took an unexpected turn yesterday when Guinness Peat trumped an offer from its much larger American rival Mattel. The City had assumed the purpose of an initial \$42 million offer from the Guinness Peat investment group in January was to provoke one of the big US toy makers into bidding for the struggling maker of Polly Pocket toys. Then Guinness Peat could book a profit on its underperforming 23 per cent share holding.

When Mattel, the world's largest toy maker, made a bid worth \$46 million in March this strategy appeared to have paid off.

Despite Guinness Peat's new, and final, offer of \$48.2 million, analysts believe the company is not interested in running Bluebird over the long term but is merely seeking to wring a higher bid

from Mattel. The US company may pay up and end the five months of manoeuvring. It is seen as the logical bidder because its co-operation is crucial to the success of a planned relaunch of Polly Pocket and an allied Disney Tiny product in the US. Mattel said its bid was intended to ensure that it could bring Bluebird's products to their full potential. One observer said that without Mattel's support in recent years Bluebird would have foundered.

But there is a chance that Guinness Peat could end up running one of the UK's last toy companies. Its position is that this affair has gone on long enough and that its new offer is a fair price.

It sees the group's recent failures as those of management. Guinness Peat says that, while it may not know much about toys, it does know about management and what Bluebird needs is some good old-fashioned financial discipline.

Irish bank on prowl for second building society

Jill Treanor

BANK of Ireland is planning to spend at least \$500 million on a further building society to strengthen its business in the UK following last year's purchase of Bristol & West. While Bank of Ireland suggests a war chest of \$500 million is available, City sources believe the group could afford more than \$1 billion if it could persuade its shareholders of the merits of a deal. Skipton and Portman probably lie within its initial price

range, but it may consider larger societies such as Yorkshire or Britannia. The Dublin-based institution is coy about disclosing its targets or even confirming that it has made approaches. City sources point out the bank is not under pressure to make an acquisition and is able to wait until the price of potential partners falls from their current heady levels.

"We would never mention the name of a target," said Paul D'Alton, the group's chief financial officer. The price would need to be right. In any case, an approach

may fall on deaf ears as all the potential societies say they are committed to mutual status and not looking at merger or flotation. Carpenters will find their options limited. Most societies have raised their minimum balances or have required that windfalls be donated to charity. The ownership structure of building societies has slipped off the agenda recently, but is likely to become the subject of much debate later this year when members of the Nationwide have the opportunity to vote on demutualisation.

Many building societies see this vote as important for the entire sector. Bank of Ireland is credited with having acquired Bristol & West last year for a "sensible" \$200 million and one analyst said that "it won't be forced into paying outrageous prices". Bristol & West's first set of results since becoming part of the Bank of Ireland group showed profits of \$81.2 million and a 3.5 per cent share of the mortgage market, up from 2.3 per cent. Overall, profits at Bank of Ireland, which in terms of

shareholder returns has been in the top quartile of retail banks in the UK and Ireland for the last five years, rose a third to IR£330.4 million (\$460 million). Mr D'Alton said the outlook for the group was good, helped by the healthy Irish economy. The group has invested IR£25 million in technology over the last financial year, IR£22 million on the year 2000 computer bug and IR£3 million on preparations for the introduction of the euro. Over the next five years, the group expects to spend another IR£30 million on technology.



Underside Dan Atkinson

AND a big hello to the Wind Fund, "an equity fund in small-scale renewable energy projects". The electronic version of its prospectus, we learn from the Internet, "will appear on this site on May 13 1998, launch date of the issue". Splendid. Furthermore: "This site will be live on Thursday May 14 1998." That's energy conservation for you.

MEANWHILE, our elected representatives continue to muse long and hard about

the nation's entrepreneurial base. Commercial finance company ASC Partnership wrote to a number of MPs asking what they intended to do about such pertinent issues as high taxes, inflexible business rates and too few start-up incentives. Back rolled some jolly interesting replies.

The Rt Hon Paddy Ashdown was deeply moved. "I am grateful to you for taking the trouble to write — and I read your letter with interest." Now there's a man who doesn't believe in the slick, ill-considered response.

ELSEWHERE, Britain's best-known beef-burger-booster John Gummer is not a man to let the grass grow under his feet. Before destiny calls



him to be Mayor of London, he continues to fulfil his wider public duty of making the world a safer place. The former environment

secretary has been appointed chairman of Valpak Limited, the not-for-profit organisation which helps businesses meet their packaging recycling obligations. We are looking forward to TV pictures of Mr Gummer stuffing cardboard and bubble wrap down the throats of his adoring kinder.

TALKING of safety, Eurotunnel has made a big hit with its special offer for motorists wishing to pop over to France for a romantic dinner.

At just \$9 a car, return fare, regardless of its passenger load, who could resist the chance to board the shuttle for an evening's enjoyment, French-style? One thousand people

are tooting over every night, we hear.

True, the offer, recently launched, applies after 6pm. And true, revellers have to be rolling back by 6am the next day. Doubtless the person behind the wheel will have stuck to sparkling Evian. If not, Kent Constabulary's traffic division won't have far to look for some extra drink-drive collars.

STAYING with the criminal-justice system, we are prohibited by a court injunction from naming the London solicitors who bumbled into print on Wednesday afternoon proclaiming across the fax-machine wires the joyful news of their client's acquittal on fraud charges.

The whole point of the injunction, however, was to bar comment on the acquittal because the jury was still out on two co-defendants. More than three hours later, the legal eagles fired off an emergency fax killing the earlier ghost and sparing them a possible stretch inside for contempt of court.

TO END where we began, in cyber-space. The Boeing group boasts three information points on the Internet for those interested in its role in world aviation. Click "The Boeing Company", however, and find a demand for a password. You can't be too careful in this new age of openness and transparency.

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FinanceGuardian

Bottom line is that Britain still can't make it

Larry Elliott
Economics Editor

THE Government called for concerted action yesterday after a new study showed that Britain's industrial and services sectors lag far behind its main economic rivals in terms of productivity.

Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, and Trade and Industry Secretary Margaret Beckett said bringing output per head in business up to the level of the world's best was the next big challenge facing the Government.

The two ministers held a joint seminar with business leaders at 11 Downing Street yesterday to discuss the findings of an interim report by management consultancy McKinsey into six important sectors of the economy.

This showed that labour productivity in Britain's automotive industry was only 50 per cent of that in the world's best performer, Japan, while the food-processing sector was only 75 per cent as efficient as that in the United States.

Britain's service sector fared no better, with food retailing, hotels, telecoms and computer software all well behind the best-performing countries.

"Britain's inherited under-performance represents not only a challenge but an opportunity," Mr Brown said. "We have the chance, by working together, to raise our game, to modernise and to secure the higher productivity on which higher growth, employment and living standards depend."

"To achieve this, we need a new national economic purpose, and first we need to develop a clear, shared understanding of the nature of the productivity gap and what is needed to close it."

The McKinsey study found

that the gaps between the leading G7 industrial nations remained significant. That between the US and other countries narrowed in the aftermath of the second world war, but this trend came to a halt in the 1990s.

McKinsey estimates that output per head in the UK — stripping out health, education and the civil service — is 40 per cent lower than in the US and 20 per cent below that in western Germany.

A McKinsey source said the reasons for Britain's productivity performance could be found only through a sector-by-sector study, but it was unlikely that the lack of investment was the sole problem.

In a similar McKinsey study of the US, it was found that traditional American car plants performed much worse than those in Japan. Once Japanese management and working practices were transplanted to US sites, productivity rose to 90 per cent of the world leader's level.

The Treasury said that the study raised four big issues — investment, skills, competition and management — which would be looked at during preparation of the DTI's white paper on competitiveness, due out in the autumn, and next year's Budget.

Ministers would look at ways of using the tax system to encourage investment and research and development, the need to improve the quality of the workforce, ways of making capital and product markets work more effectively, and Britain's entire management culture.

"The McKinsey work echoes the emerging consensus of my own — consultation process," Mrs Beckett said. "From investment to management decisions, and from the competition framework to training, both government and companies have a role to play in boosting UK productivity."

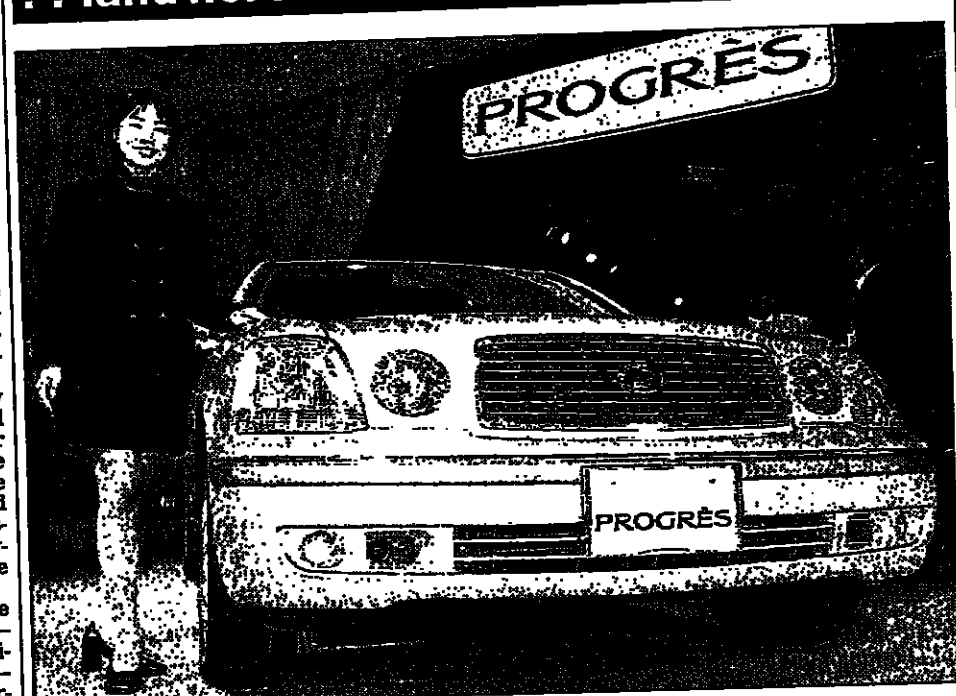
Here's the way we work. . .



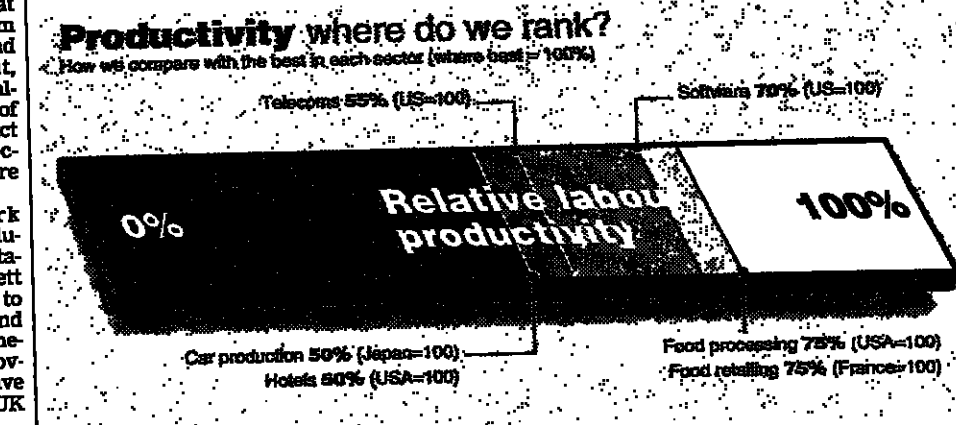
Sweeping reforms needed . . . A great British institution shows off traditional craftsmanship

PHOTOGRAPH: SEAN SMITH

...and here's the competition



Best foot forward . . . Despite the unsteadiness of the Asian economy, Japanese manufacturers are still buoyant. Toyota shows its confidence with the launch of its new compact luxury sedan Progres for the home market yesterday, priced from £14,000



McKINSEY'S conclusion that the UK automotive manufacturing industry's labour productivity is half that of Japan is only part of the story, writes Nicholas Barnister.

Professor Kumar Bhattacharyya, head of the Warwick Manufacturing Group at Warwick University, said the costs of making a vehicle in Japan and Britain are much closer because UK labour costs are lower.

There are many pitfalls in attempting to compare labour productivity, he says. Professor Bhattacharyya says that low volumes in the UK make it harder to generate funds to invest in manufacturing innovation and management is also more cautious than that in Japan or Germany.

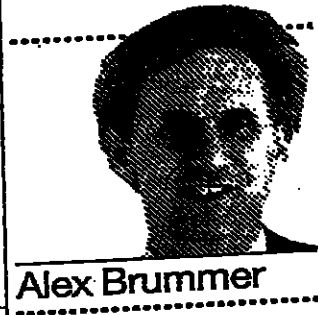
"Our culture is not to make any mistakes, so companies tend to copy what was done before," he said. "We are very innovative at the conceptual stage but when we deconstruct for manufacturing, we lose our touch."

Japanese vehicles are better designed for assembly. The productivity of Rover workers was 60 per cent higher when making the Honda-designed Acclaim than when they made the British designed Princess and Allegro, he said.

Nissan said its Sunderland plant matched the productivity of its sister plants in Japan. It was the only way it could be sure of getting new investment. General Motors issued its Vauxhall subsidiary with a straightforward ultimatum: agree to more flexible working or see your jobs exported to more efficient GM plants overseas.

Notebook

Premier pours oil on ethics blaze



Alex Brummer

THE directors of Premier Oil take a rather old-fashioned view of annual general meetings. At a time when the whole process of corporate governance has been targeted at opening up corporations and letting some light in on the darker corners, here is an independent oil company determined to shut down debate about its activities.

It is not pleasant to be bombarded by questions from small, single-interest shareholders such as the World Development Movement. But this is a respected non-governmental organisation which in the past has been successful in opening a positive dialogue with a range of other mineral and extraction companies, including Rio Tinto Zinc. In much the same way, the tide of dislike for Shell turned when the company decided to go the whole hog and do a social audit to open up contentious areas to public scrutiny.

That apparently is not the way of Premier's non-executive chairman David John and his fellow directors. Instead of allowing the public and shareholders not repre-

sented inside the Methodist Hall, London, access to the company's activities yesterday by letting financial journalists report on events — the press was barred. This is a practice almost unheard of among public companies.

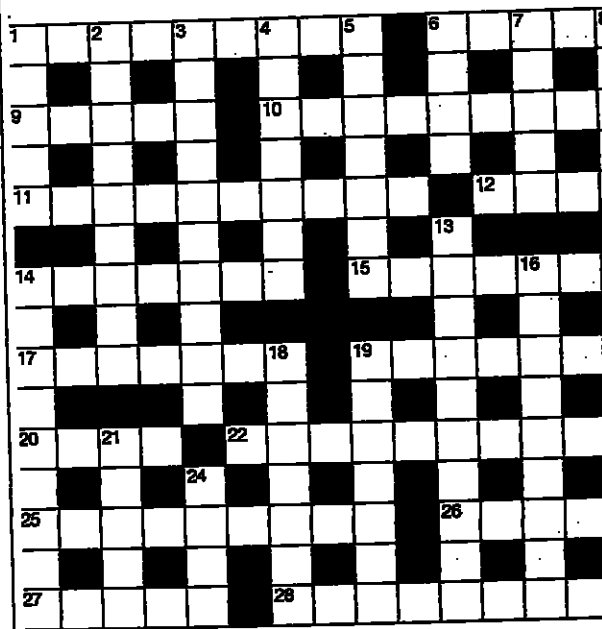
It is possible, one supposes, that Mr John already feels he has more than enough to cope with as a non-executive director of British Biotech, the company whose shares have been brought low by allegations of poorly timed share sales by executive directors and problems with clinical trials.

However, investors in Premier who could not make the annual general meeting might feel that they deserve to know more about the company's exploration than the demure press release which is the sole official source of information. This reveals only that Premier has major development projects in Burma, Indonesia, Albania and Pakistan which are on schedule. Of the four countries mentioned, three have among the worst human rights records in the world and consequently face sustained political instability of the kind which has striven the streets of Jakarta with the bodies of students.

This has a great deal to do with how investors in companies such as Premier will feel about its future. All shareholders deserve to know how the directors intend to deal with the human rights aspects of their business, including the survival of tribal peoples. Behaving towards the press in the tried and tested manner of the Burmese junta does not impress.

Guardian Crossword No 21,275

Set by Hendra



Across

- Yards taken to joint that makes suit (9)
- Terse letter from Germany (5)
- Number in a war with China (9)
- Acrobatic feat which leaves an impression on the field? (9)
- Attractive girl liable to change into something more comfortable (10)
- Endlessly lavish with icing on the cake (4)
- Sweetheart audacious to hold line (7)
- Visionary beautiful in the air (7)
- Ticker sometimes troubling bookkeeper (7)
- Remembers visits to London? (5,2)
- Fine in this resort? (4)
- English company clear in dealing with environmental matters (10)
- Past eight — going out for a pasta? (9)
- Composer in chosen state of ignorance (5)
- Day and year of the wood god (5)
- Sheep from Dudley? (9)

Down

- Glory on day of press (5)
- Sun-ridden part, possibly, not covered (9)
- Striking bar counters, we hear, in the Festival Hall (10)

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BA makes peace offer to USAir

Keith Harper
Transport Editor

BITISH Airways' estranged partner, USAir, may be invited to join the proposed BA-American Airlines alliance.

BA sources said last night that USAir's dominance of routes on America's east coast would expand the alliance's network of routes in the United States and make the partnership one of the most formidable in the world. First, USAir would have to

withdraw its lawsuit blocking the merger. The action was filed soon after BA and AA announced that they were proceeding with the alliance. It alleges that the alliance breached the terms of a 1993 agreement between BA and USAir and would allow the companies to dominate the American market.

Four years ago, BA took a 22 per cent stake in USAir, America's fourth-largest carrier, which rescued it from near-bankruptcy. It has since sold the stake.

Lawsuits of this nature are

not uncommon in the US and the move has been regarded by some analysts as little more than an attempt by USAir to secure a better deal for itself.

Talks to approve the alliance of BA and AA have been bogged down for almost two years. The European Commission is moving gradually towards approving it, but the British and US governments, while favouring the plan in principle, have not yet got down to detailed talks.

BA's interest in Eurostar, the high-speed rail service

from London to Paris, could extend to running trains direct from Heathrow airport to the Gare du Nord. Company sources stressed last night that this was one of several options it was examining in seeking to take over Eurostar services from London and Continental Railways.

BA joined bus and train operator National Express to bid for operation of Eurostar services from London to Paris and Brussels after LCR failed to get more money from the Government to build the Channel tunnel rail link.

Suitors dance PolyGram tune

Lisa Buckingham

ABIDDING war has broken out for PolyGram, the world's largest record company, whose acts include U2, Pulp and All Saints.

As Philips, the Dutch electronics conglomerate which controls 75 per cent of PolyGram's shares, confirmed yesterday that it was in takeover talks with entertainment and drinks group Seagram, two other groups of bidders showed their hand.

Despite a likely sale tag of more than \$6 billion, analysts were reluctant to rule out the possibility that more potential buyers might emerge.

Philips and Seagram, the Canadian company with interests from whisky to Universal Studios, admitted they have begun takeover talks. Seagram, which owns MCA, last week walked away from talks with British music group EMI after its overtures had been made public.

Edgar Bronfman Jr, chief executive of Seagram, is keen to link with PolyGram — which has sales close to \$2.5 billion a year — to secure the number one slot in the global recorded music charts.

Such a deal would also bolster Seagram's flagging film business, which has suffered two setbacks with Primary Colors and Mercury Rising. PolyGram's film unit is not profitable but is responsible for releases such as Bean, Four Weddings and a Funeral and new Coen brothers feature The Big Lebowski. Its library of more than 1,500 films includes hits such as When Harry Met Sally and The Graduate.

Seagram is ranged against two US leveraged buy-out funds — Thomas H Lee and Forstmann Little, whose offer will be fronted by Michael Ovitz, a former Walt Disney executive. Another offer is expected from Wall Street's Donaldson, Lufkin & Jenrette in co-operation with leveraged buy-out fund Texas Pacific.

Although PolyGram has about 17 per cent of the world music market, parent Philips would like to quit the entertainment business, where erratic profits and an impending business downturn are threatening to undermine buoyant performances elsewhere in the group. Chief executive Cor Boonstra is pledged to excise the "bleeders" from Philips' business portfolio.

Kaliber whets appetites in dry states

Laurie Laird

GUINNESS, along with other brewers, made the mistake in the 1980s of believing that it could convince the great British pub-goer to switch to non-alcoholic lager.

In a flash of inspiration, the brewer has now come up with the perfect solution to salvage some self-respect from its blunder — sell the drink across the Middle East where alcohol consumption is largely banned.

Yesterday, Diageo — the result of the merger between Guinness and Grand Metropolitan — said it will license production of Kaliber non-alcoholic beer to Egypt's Al-Ahram Beverages Company (ABC).

ABC will also gain the exclusive right to distribute the brand in 10 other Islamic countries, including Saudi Arabia, Iran, Sudan and Lebanon. "They are trying to get some sort of value out of something that's valueless," said a Diageo spokesman.

Launched in 1985 to take advantage of the growing awareness of the pitfalls of drinking and driving, the non-alcoholic and low-alcohol lagers never really caught the fancy of western drinkers. Reduced alcohol drinks captured 3 per cent of the market in their heyday but garner under half a per cent now.

"At first it was right to be seen drinking non-alcoholic beer, but now people have moved to soft drinks," said John Spicer, brewing analyst at SBC Dillon Read.

Diageo may find it difficult to quench the thirst of the Islamic world, however. One of the biggest problems is taste. Early concoctions were brewed normally, with the alcohol then removed by boiling; the resulting product "tasted disgusting" according to one analyst.

Modern brews contain only a small amount of alcohol in the initial process, which is later removed chemically. The new product is only marginally better, the analyst said.

سكنا من الامل